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Blandford, Thomas

Co-operative workshops in Great Britain, 1897

London

[1897?]

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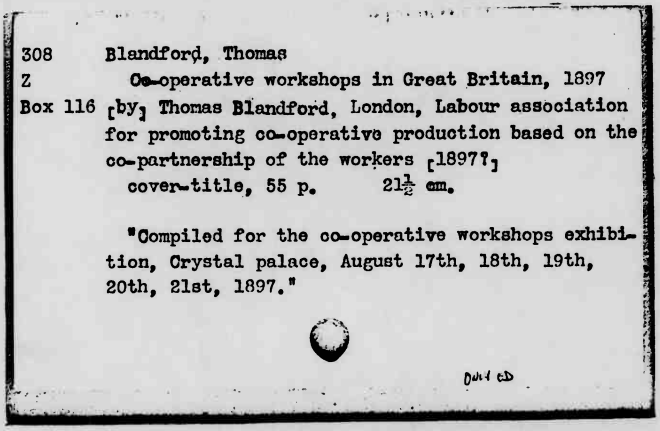

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CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOPS

IN

GREAT BRITAIN,

1897.

THOMAS BLANDFORD.

THE LABOUR ASSOCIATION

FOR

PROMOTING CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION BASED ON THE CO-PARTNERSHIP OF THE WORKERS.

Central Office:
15 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

LABOUR ASSOCIATION

FOR

Promoting Co-operative Production based on Co-partnership of the Workers.

Central Office—15 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

EXECUTIVE.

President.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

Hon. Legal Adviser.

J. M. LUDLOW.

Hon. Treasurer.

ANEURIN WILLIAMS.

Vice-Presidents.

BISHOP OF DURHAM.
FRANK BALLARD.
THOMAS BLANDFORD.
A. K. CONNELL.
F. MADDISON, M.P.
WILLIAM CAMPBELL.
EARL GREY.
TOM MANN.
THE EARL OF STAMFORD.
HON. T. A. BRASSEY.
F. A. CHANNING, M.P.
JOSEPH GREENWOOD.
E. O. GREENING.
PROFESSOR MARSHALL.
HON. DADABHAI NAOROJI.
HODGSON PRATT.

Members of Committee.

MRS LAWRENSON.
MISS H. C. MADDEN.
MISS L. GRAINGER.
MISS S. GURNEY.
J. H. DABORN.
G. HUBBARD.
HENRY MAY.
J. W. NEAL.
W. G. SANDERS.
W. SHARMAN.
G. MEEK.
W. PARNELL.

Secretary.

HENRY VIVIAN.

WE earnestly ask the reader's attention to the important work which is being done by the Labour Association.

The work we set ourselves to do is not so much to raise our working people, as to help them to raise themselves. We think this is more effectual than almsgiving, and as hopeful as any movement of our time.

To advance the objects of the Association, the Committee desire the assistance of friends—(1) By helping to organise Meetings, Lectures, Conferences, Distribution of Literature amongst the Societies, Trade Unions, or Associations with which they may be connected; (2) By supplying the Committee with any information concerning the starting or position of any Co-operative Productive Societies in their district; (3) By becoming subscribers to the Association's funds of any sum not less than One Shilling per annum.

We respectfully invite all friends of social progress to become subscribers to the Association, and to assist in the extension of its work.

THE EXECUTIVE.

COMPILED FOR THE

CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOPS EXHIBITION,

CRYSTAL PALACE,

AUGUST 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 1897.

INTRODUCTION.

EXHIBITIONS are organised in order that they may be seen; but in these busy times, when all men are importuned for widely different purposes, they are likely to overlook anything that is not brought directly before them, and it may pass unnoticed even by those who would be most interested if they had been advertised of its existence and purpose; and so this handbook, along with other advertisements, is published to show reason why as many as possible of all sorts of people should visit this Exhibition of the Products of Co-operative Workshops, at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, or, if they cannot visit the Exhibition, to furnish some idea of what the Exhibition is like and what it is to illustrate. The Exhibition opens on the afternoon of Tuesday, 17th August, and remains open until the evening of the following Saturday, 21st August.

Exhibitions are so common a feature of modern life that we have one almost every day; indeed, they are so numerous that it is necessary for the promoters of each one to give good reasons for their project. We have several good reasons. This is the Eleventh Annual Exhibition promoted by the Labour Association in conjunction with the National Co-operative Festival. The first was held in the rooms of the Royal Horticultural Society, at South Kensington, in 1887; the second at the Crystal Palace in 1888, when 27,000 people were present; and in 1896 there were 41,755 people present. Thus we are encouraged to proceed,

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

LABOUR ASSOCIATION

FOR

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M.W.I. July 20, '23.

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not only because our cause is good, but also because it has received so large a share of public recognition as the figures just given indicate. The continued support of the public shows that the Festival is attractive as well as instructive, and the members of the Labour Association venture to think that the "Exhibition of Products of Co-operative Workshops" is one of its most attractive features. The exhibition is not only interesting as a show, but is, moreover, valuable for what it denotes. It is not merely an exhibition of commodities produced under ordinary commercial conditions, such as may be seen in the shop windows of any market street, but an exhibition of goods produced in places where an attempt is being made to develop a system wherein industry would be conducted under humane conditions, where men would co-operate for common advantages instead of individually competing for place, wages, and profit. These were the ideas that moved the early co-operators, these were the ends they had in view; they looked beyond storekeeping to co-operative self-employment.

So far the Co-operative movement has been chiefly successful in storekeeping. A marvellous plant has grown from the seed planted by the Rochdale Pioneers' Society, when in 1844 they opened a co-operative store for the sale of goods to members on the basis of dividing the profits among the customers in proportion to their purchases. In Rochdale the Co-operative method has so far supplanted private trade that there are now in the town three co-operative stores. In 1895 the Societies had 19,064 members, holding a share and loan capital of £479,740, doing an annual trade of £402,222, at a profit for the year of £57,776. Spreading beyond Rochdale, up and down the country, the store movement has grown until in 1895 it comprised 1,486 Distributive Societies, with 1,314,093 members; owning a share, loan, and reserve capital of £16,474,630; doing a trade in the year of £34,224,815, which showed a net profit of £4,892,713. So successful indeed has co-operative storekeeping been, that most of the general public, and even a large number of those who call themselves co-operators, have come to look upon "Co-operation" only as a term indicating combination for economic

distribution of commodities. Yet it was meant to be more than this, and has greater things for productive industry within its scope for the future; and in a time when innumerable plans are being brought forward to answer the "Social Question," it would be lamentable if co-operators neglected to remind the unconverted or unknowing public that some effort is already being made to improve our industrial methods, and the Co-operative Workshops Exhibition will serve as an indication of what is being done. We do not pretend that Co-operative Production is a universal remedy that can be immediately applied at all times and in all places where suffering exists, but we do claim that it can gradually be developed as the opportunity serves until all industry shall feel its influence.

That there is need for an alteration few deny. Every one who thinks or feels has lately been grieved by the facts made public concerning the manner in which some branches of industry are misconducted. The House of Lords Committee on the "Sweating System" and the Labour Commission have made discoveries of the evil way in which some articles of daily use are manufactured, and have shown that some "cheap" things are very "dear" to produce—for they cost us the life and happiness of people who, because they are helpless and ignorant, because they have little technical skill and small capacity for combination, have to work long hours in detestable places for little pay. The Committees sat on many occasions, and examined a large number of witnesses from different localities. The inquiries were no small thing, confined to one trade or one district, their scope was wide, and the results go to show still more, if we had not known it already, that this is no time for sitting idle, as if we lived in the best of all possible worlds. This state of things appeals closely to all who would like to see men and women happy instead of miserable. There may be great difference of opinion as to the causes or reasons of the "sweating system," but all are agreed that its results are bad. It may be caused, as we are told, by either the ignorance of the workers, the greed of the capitalist, or the false economy of purchasers who think that low prices are the sign of value, or it may be a combination of all these things; but whatever may

be the cause the result is bad, and men want to know how to avoid it. The "sweating system" has been shown to be no small evil; it is large and growing. Its existence condemns the state it thrives in, and shows that what are called the "ordinary dictates of humanity" have not yet found general acceptance even in civilised communities. A recognition of its evils has led many people to believe that we should not consider ourselves free to buy in the cheapest market unless we know the cheapness has not meant suffering for the producers. Recognising the moral responsibility of the purchaser, they are anxious to procure goods free of the taint of the "sweater." Those who wish to do this are sometimes discouraged by the difficulty of procuring goods free from suspicion, but all such will find their opportunity at the exhibition of the products of "Co-operative Workshops based on the co-partnership of the worker."

All the Societies want custom—that is the normal condition of an industrial establishment; and all who believe in the principles on which these works are conducted can help them to larger trade. We can all help them by buying whatever we want that they produce, and by advising our friends to adopt the same course. This is not asking for charity; the goods offered are fair market value, or the successful Societies would not have been able to reach their present condition. But it would be accepting charity if we purchased goods produced too cheaply, because goods so produced are too often the result of underpaid labour by people who cannot secure a return sufficient to maintain themselves and their families. Some of the Societies want more capital, and cannot grow freely for want of it. All who like their method of working can help them to secure either custom or capital; some can help them in both. The fortunate people who have money to spare for good work can find a good use for their surplus by investing it in shares in the Co-operative Workshops, and if they wisely divide their investment amongst a number of Societies it will return the average rate of interest. For those who, though wishful to help, have not time to inquire about all the Societies before investing, the Co-operative Productive Federation Limited has opened a Loan Fund, and receives

loans which it lends to Societies that can make good use of the money. In this way a reliable investment with regular interest is available for those who wish to help Co-operative Production.

It is not only as an alternative to the "sweating system," however, that Industrial Co-operation is desirable. The condition of affairs is sad enough in the "sweated" trades. We know that in these trades, bad as things are, a large number of men and women cling desperately to badly paid work because they can get nothing better to do, and a continual struggle, a guerilla warfare, is carried on; there is no rule, no standard. The workers have to fight their employers for a higher rate of pay, and fight against time to produce enough to live on. The employer has to fight his workpeople for cheaper labour, and fight against competition for orders. Not only in ill-paid, badly organised trades, as, for instance, the nail and chain, and cheap boot and clothing industries, but even in the higher skilled, better paid trades, there is not peace. Those who talk lightly about "keeping a ring while the two sides fight it out," perhaps little dream of the cost the fight entails, and the evil things these long and bitter struggles leave behind them. The sorrow and suffering, and hatred and loss, would be bad enough if only the contending parties were affected,—but it is not so, it cannot be, for they form part of the national industrial organisation, all parts of which depend upon each other, and a struggle in one great industry makes thousands suffer who have no hand in the fight. No doubt these conflicts are inevitable so long as industry is conducted on a competitive basis, and seeing that they are for the present unavoidable, we must expect each side to fight the fight in its own way. But we want to find some basis of agreement.

Capital and labour cannot agree upon their respective portions of what they produce together. Something is needed to reconcile them. At present there is war between them, and war is a remnant of barbarism. The fight is hard and the struggles violent, because victory means so much to each. This aspect of modern industry is visible to all, no man could be ignorant of it even if he wished. Boards of Conciliation, Arbitration, and all other mediators

are admirable, and do their own good work. Yet they are not sufficient, they still leave the opponents facing each other; they cannot combine the two forces into one harmonious body. Something else is necessary, and those of us who believe in "Industrial Co-operation based on the co-partnership of the worker" believe in it because we think it offers a method of securing industrial peace instead of industrial war, by enabling the workman to become the owner of a part at least of the capital required for his employment. If this were accomplished, it would then be possible to decide how much each should be given to labour, management, and capital, without going to war over it.

Some important testimony bearing on this question was given by the General Secretary of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives, Mr Alderman Inskip, during his evidence before the Royal Labour Commission, on 25th February 1892, and his evidence has since been published by the Society:—

"The Leicester Co-operative Boot and Shoe Society Limited was formed in September 1886, by about sixty working-men, mostly connected with our union, and commenced business in July 1887.

"After five years' practical experience, I believe co-operative production, based on the partnership of the workers, would remove nearly all existing difficulties between capital and labour.

"All male adult workers are members of the trade union, yet it has not cost the union a penny during the whole of the time it has been in existence."

Since the evidence containing these statements was given, this Society, with others, has grown larger and stronger, as will be seen on referring to the examples in the following pages. It is a striking proof of the success of co-partnership in preventing industrial war, that during the long conflict in the boot trade, which had such disastrous effects, not one co-partnership workshop was affected. The matters in dispute had been arranged with the Union, and the Societies continued at work, so showing an example that must have had a strong influence on opinion, not only in their own trade, but upon the general public as well.

Industry so conducted would thus be free from strikes and "sweating." But this is not all, there are other un-

desirable features of the present competitive system. It is a mistake to suppose that the demand for higher wages is the beginning and end of the "Labour Question." Not so, it is more than this, it includes the wish of the "working-classes" to be treated not like children, not like machines, but like men and women. Co-operation would secure better personal treatment for the workman in his place of employment. In this line of improvement we have much to hope for. The present system gives an employer despotic power, which he often misuses. It is not to be wondered at, for all of us might fail to be always impartial, most men would fear to be tempted with such power.

Consider how large the power vested in one man who controls great industrial, commercial, or financial undertakings,—a power that grows greater with the increase of "unskilled labour," for large numbers of "unskilled" workers and all those fit for positions of trust depend entirely upon "references" for a chance of getting work. In some large business places a few men thus have the lives of hundreds in their hands, and this often leads to bitterness of feeling, although in the majority of cases the power is used temperately. But it is undesirable, and needs a remedy. Where work cannot be got without a satisfactory reference, the reference giver is lord of all. As the workers advance in education, as they increase in knowledge and develop more self-respect, it will become increasingly difficult to conduct industry on a system which relies too much on the arbitrary power of the employer to discharge men and women for trifling offences that might never have been committed if the workers had been more freely trained in responsibility. It is not a question of renouncing the share of subordination inevitable in the conduct of all undertakings,—no one thinks of renouncing that; but when the general opinion comes to have some share in framing the rules, then they will be more certainly obeyed. It is the difference between despotic and constitutional government. So long as industry rests on its present basis it cannot be expected that the employer will relinquish any of his authority, and those who desire another system must help to build it up. It cannot be done by any arbitrary declaration of the equality of all men, but much may be accomplished by

such work as Godin did at Guise, and some of our fellow-workmen are doing in some Co-operative Workshops in England.

All the exhibiting Societies share profits with their workpeople, and the Labour Association has always made this a prominent part of its propaganda, not because it is considered an end sufficient in itself, but because where the workman's share of profits is capitalised by being placed to his share account in the books of the Society that employs him, it ensures him some share in the direction of affairs, it emphasises the necessity for the worker to take his share of responsibility, and it trains him in a habit of considering the permanent well-being of the Society as well as his own immediate advantage. This tends towards resting the ownership of the business largely in the workpeople. It has another advantage. Where the workers' share of profits is turned into capital, it strengthens the Society, and enables it to grow quicker than it could if all profits were drained away. Partly in this way, and partly by means of the capital which Distributive Societies daily grow more willing to invest, the Co-operative Workshops will become able to undertake the "larger industry" towards which all things tend.

In some of the Societies the governing committees are drawn from outside shareholders, in others they consist partly of outside shareholders and partly of workers in the shop, and some are governed by committees consisting of working shareholders employed in the place. Thus, as in all these places the workers are able to exercise a strong influence over the conduct of affairs, we may be sure that as they grow in strength and experience they will do more and more for the organisation of industry on a humane basis.

All these matters will be of direct interest to the workman, for he will see the results that have been gained in these various attempts to reconcile labour and capital, or rather to make of them one force moving coherently. Whilst workman competes with workman for employment, whilst uncertainty of employment keeps ever before him the fear of want, and when he sees that old age will render him unable to work without his being able to prepare for it, it would be strange indeed if the workman who thinks, did

not wish for a better method than our present competitive system, which reduces men to the condition of machines hired by the hour, and discarded as easily as we part with a worn-out tool. His employer has not much power to assist him. The employer himself is hard pressed by keen and careful competitors.

To every worker who has thought the matter over and wishes to find a peaceful solution of the "Labour Question," the Co-operative Workshops offer examples of attempts in various trades where men are trying to work out a system of "Co-operation" which shall supersede "Competition," and produce a state where men and women who work will be treated as fellow-creatures, and not considered merely as "hands" without hearts or brains behind them. It is a hard fight that looms before the men of a cause like this, for they have to meet the opposition of all sorts of prejudice. But it is worth fighting. It is *not* to be won in a series of brilliant charges or sudden attacks, but by the persistence of men endowed with the courage that will not accept defeat. And victory would mean that the profits of trade would be used to promote the improvement of the people.

Although Co-operation has been most successful in storekeeping, for the progress of industrial reform, like other things, moves along the lines of least resistance, this success will now be a help to Productive Co-operation, for it has created a great co-operative market where co-operative manufactures are welcome, and this is valuable indeed in a world where the ordinary trader looks with a cold eye on Co-operation. More than this, the successful and expanding co-operative store movement is a fine training ground for the men who do active work in it. They are trained in business habits, and become accustomed to the direction of large undertakings, and are gradually acquiring a capacity for the direction of industry that will do much in the future.

Perhaps enough has been said to show that these workshops as representing a cause, appeal to a very large public, and have interest for every one who is tired of industrial war and longs for industrial peace. We cannot, of course, hope to be able to rival the gigantic exhibitions organised in the interests of national commerce. We cannot venture to compare ourselves with any of the great commercial

advertisements arranged as exhibitions, but we need not therefore feel discouraged although our Exhibition is not great, and we cannot afford to spend fortunes in advertising it. Growing things are not valued only by their present size, but also by their future possibilities. And we can apply to our cause the same test we apply to men. It is not usually considered desirable to value a man according to his wealth, in personal or landed estate. The final test is not applied even to intellect or knowledge, but to character, for without this the man is of little use to himself or others. And if this test is applied here, we think the character of the undertaking will be found worthy of admiration. Each Society is a proof that something has been done, much unselfish effort put forth, and that some results worth having have been gained.

In the following account of the exhibiting Societies will be found information concerning their trade and present condition, which I have drawn from the published accounts of the Societies, supplemented in some cases by the information published by them through the Co-operative Productive Federation, a Society formed to do for these workshops the valuable work of a joint canvasser, agent, and advertiser. The exhibiting Societies are important examples of the labour co-partnership movement, which, as the following figures* show, is growing rapidly and strongly :—

	1883.	1896.
Number of Societies	15	152
Sales for the Year	£160,751	£2,164,802
Capital (Share, Reserve, Loan)	103,436	1,077,716
Profits	9,031	112,991
Losses	114	12,070
Net Profit	8,917	100,921
Profit to Labour	...	16,083

THOMAS BLANDFORD.

August 1897.

* The figures are taken from *Labour Co-partnership* for August 1897.

ACCOUNTS OF EXHIBITING SOCIETIES.

THE AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED, CREEK ROAD, DEPTFORD, S.E.; DYOTT STREET, W.C.; AND 3 AGAR STREET, STRAND, W.C.

"Reliable" Farm and Garden Seeds; Pure Feeding Cakes and Meals for Cattle; Guaranteed Artificial Manures for Farm and Garden Crops.

Although Agriculture, like other callings, has known a long series of slow improvements, it has seen more change within the last few generations than had passed into practice during many previous centuries. Machinery, artificial manures, great improvements in the breeding of stock, rotation of crops, facilitation of transit, and a thousand things helped the growth of a number of dependent industries. Along with this, as was proved by the evidence taken on more than one Bill before the House, there grew up a gross system of adulteration of the goods supplied to Agriculturists. Adulteration is a crime of ancient not modern invention, but it was reserved for modern times to hear it justified by public men who had their imitators in those seed merchants who mixed old seeds with new, dead seeds with live, and one seed with another, and justified their conduct as the "practice of the trade." In few trades has adulteration been more open, evil, and systematic, than in Agriculture, worthless substances strongly charged with offensive odours being sold as valuable manures. The Association commenced business on a mutual basis in 1868 to supply farm requirements absolutely free from adulteration. It consists of members holding at least one £1 share. There is no proprietary other than the 3,000 members drawn from the landowners and agriculturists of the country. Its business is managed by a Council of twelve members and a Managing Director. One-third of the Members of Council retire annually and are eligible for re-election.

The progress of the Association has been sure and steady, except during the great agricultural depression in the disastrous

years of 1878 and 1879. At that time it was publicly estimated that the owners and occupiers of land lost in two seasons the enormous sum of 250 millions sterling. All businesses which relied for their success on British agriculture were disastrously affected, and the Agricultural and Horticultural Association did not escape. That it was able to weather the storm was due to the public appreciation of the principles upon which the Association was based by its founders. Sufficient members remained firmly attached to it as purchasers and investors, until it had time to recover.

Since 1878-79 the Association has persistently developed its manufacturing power, and nearly 70 per cent. of all the Association now sells is manufactured at the Deptford works. Extensive waterside wharves and premises have been completed, where the Association can import raw materials and work them up in its own mill and works.

The materials of artificial manures are ground to fine powder, and thoroughly mixed by machines running at 2,300 to 2,500 revolutions a minute. Complete manures for every crop and all kinds of land are made to proper scientific proportions, and sent out in sealed bags to members. In an extensive mill oilcakes are made, specially fitted for milk production, for fatting quickly, and for the feeding of store beasts and young stock. Meals of all kinds are ground, under conditions which assure the consumer that they are pure and from the best materials. In the oilcake and feeding stuffs department the turnover grew from £28,417 in 1891 to £37,147 in 1894. A notable feature of the Association's work is its seed department. Here all kinds of seeds are brought in; tested; freed by special machinery from dead, light, and weed seeds; packed and forwarded direct to the user. In addition, a large trade is done in penny packets of flower, vegetable, and bird seeds of every description. A new warehouse has been taken in Central London for this department. The Association's goods are sold by about 400 Co-operative Societies.

Profit-sharing with employés is practised, although not upon any systematic plan; it has been legislated for from time to time by the Council during twenty-five years. After 5 per cent. interest has been paid on capital, the profit accruing to each department is calculated separately, half the amount coming to a worker being allotted him in cash, and half being credited to him in the loan capital of the Association bearing 4 per cent. interest. The share of profit of late has ranged from 1s. to 4s. in the £ on wages in the different departments. Labour in trades carried

on in works and wharves along the river side as in this case it is, has always been badly organised; men are here to-day and gone to-morrow; large gangs are called in to unload a boat and then discharged; extra men are taken on in the busy seasons and discharged directly work slackens. Every effort has been made here to alter this by regulating the work so far as it can be done; slack time is used to prepare for busy time, so as to give nearly all workers a chance to become one of the regular staff with a fortnight's paid holiday yearly, sick pay, and other advantages. "Special Service" awards are constantly made to workers for inventions and economies. Occasional hands do not share in profits, and the amounts that would have gone to them are placed to the credit of the "Employés' Reserve Fund" used for "Sick" and "Provident" grants, and grants to the useful and successful social clubs and libraries organised by the workers.

The year's working for 1893 gave the following results:—

Allocated to Reserve Fund	£428	19 4
Do. Customers	1,803	15 3
Do. Employés	902	5 6
Carried forward ...	25	4 2

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.
1896 ...	3,169	£15,504	£32,784	£3,043	£62,593

AIREDALE CO-OPERATIVE WORSTED MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, THOMPSON'S MILL, BRADFORD.

Dress Goods in Cashmeres, Wool Ottomans, Italian Cloths, Persian Cords, &c. Every attention is given to maintaining genuineness of material, excellence of finish, and durability.

The Society was established in 1872 by some co-operators, who were afterwards joined by a few distributive societies in the district. At first the fight for trade was very hard, but after a few years' struggle the business was worked into a good position, and has now overcome the difficulties which beset the early stages of almost every undertaking. Operations were to some extent crippled by too much of the capital having been locked up in machinery, but strenuous efforts were made to secure enough work to keep the machinery running, and slowly the Society was steered into better times. It is steadily increasing its trade and improving its financial condition. The membership now consists of 149 individual shareholders and 172 shareholding societies; it trades direct with Co-operative Stores in all parts of the country,

and not only supplies them with dress goods in their "Drapery" departments, but is also acquiring a valuable connection with "Tailoring" departments as makers of Italian cloths and other linings. Lately the premises were extended and a considerable addition made to the weaving plant, in order to keep pace with the constant growth of business. The Society has kept to its original provisions for sharing profits, which were to be divided equally between labour, capital, and custom, after deducting 7½ per cent. interest on shares. The employés have unbroken employment on good work, with as good wages or better than their neighbours in the same class of trade, and they rarely leave the Society from choice. In 1873 the sales were £4,608, and the progress of the Society will be readily seen by contrasting the figures for that year with the present position of affairs given below.

Year.		Members.	Capital.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1887	...	221	£2,618	£444	£9,087	£534
			Share. Loan.			
1896	...	327	£4,556 £425	928	19,047	607

ALCESTER CO-OPERATIVE NEEDLE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, Excelsior Works, Alcester.

The Society manufactures all kinds of Needles. Hand and Machine Needles; Knitting, Toilet, Hat, and Hair Pins; Large and Small Darning Needles; Rug, Mattress, Sail, Stay, Chenille, and Packing Needles, in all sizes and lengths; Bonnaz, Blake, Steel, Bone, and Wood Crochet Hooks; Cycle, Trouser, and Toe Clips. The Society put some of their goods into a variety of Fancy Needle Cases, which form pretty and useful presents. The Society is patentee of a very pretty design for crochet, glove, and button hooks.

The Society was started by a few men, mostly members of the local co-operative store, who in 1887 quietly discussed the matter and reviewed the field thoroughly before they started upon the organisation of a co-operative workshop in a trade where the extent and variety of the stock and the innumerable details of manufacture astonish the new-comer. The contributions towards the capital were paid in small sums such as would make ordinary business men smile, the committee making the first joint payment of £1, but they soon got enough to take premises and commence business.

Under the rules the committee includes two workers; profits are divided between labour, customer, and capital, at an equal amount in the £ each. Each member is required to hold five transferable £1 shares.

Registered in 1888, the Society issued accounts which show that in the half-year ending 31st December 1889 the sales were £143. 7s. 6d.

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1891 ...	124	£530	£519	£21	£699	£29
1895 ...	195	1,761	1,618	35	2,622	32

It will be seen that the amount of loan capital is large in proportion to shares, but this is partly explained by the system practised by the members, who deposit their savings with the Society in preference to taking them elsewhere to be invested where they would have no control over them. This is very helpful to the business, for in this trade a very large and varied stock has to be kept, amounting in the Society in December 1894 to £1,695,—a considerable sum, though not what the committee consider it would be desirable to hold if orders are to be promptly executed. Two thousand pounds could very well be invested in stock. How extensive the stock should be can only be rightly understood after studying a trade list. In sewing needles, for instance, in "Brights" there are 8 sizes in 4 shapes of eyes = 32 sorts, in each of which 48,000 is a required average stock. This again must be multiplied by four qualities. Follow this out in all branches of the trade, and then the reader can form some notion of the stock to be managed.

BOOKBINDERS' CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, 17 Bury Street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

Bookbinding in all branches, both expensive and low-priced.

Registered in 1886, the Society has had much difficulty in establishing a good connection, and still depends mainly on private custom, but, having overcome most of the difficulties of inexperience, is now developing a trade with publishing houses. It differs from most of the other societies in not making interest on capital a first charge. Its division of profit would be as follows:—First charge, five per cent. of net profits to social and educational fund; five per cent. to capital; and of the remainder one-third goes to custom, and two-thirds to workers in the form of shares in the Society. New trade is got chiefly in London, but the Society has many country customers, and some of the Educational Committees of the Co-operative Stores are sending their library work. In 1891 the Society showed a profit of £45. 11s., and this was written off the previous loss. The business, though being, from the nature of the case, difficult to procure, has grown steadily from £519 in 1887, and £572 in 1888, to £666 in 1889. Last year, 1896, it was £845.

BRISTOL PIONEERS' BOOT AND SHOE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, 16 KING SQUARE, BRISTOL.

Originally founded in 1888 as an industrial partnership by five men who wished to benefit the people engaged in the boot trade, the business was conducted upon the condition that 50 per cent. of the net profits should be divided amongst the workers employed in proportion to their earnings. A small house was rented, machinery was laid down, material purchased, and operations commenced in November 1888. The first results of a canvass for trade were not encouraging, and although, in addition to local support, a few Distributive Societies outside the district gave their trade, the experience of the first ten months' work showed that success was retarded while the business was not registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. Recognising this, the promoters determined to convert it into a productive society; they secured the adhesion of men well known in the town as co-operators, and a new constitution was drafted.

The new basis was—Capital to be raised in £1 Shares, each member being required to hold not less than five; workers over the age of sixteen years eligible for membership; working members eligible for Committee; affairs to be directed by a Chairman, Secretary, and five Committee-men, until the number of members exceeds fifty, then for every additional fifty members a committee-man will be added until the Committee numbers twelve, two-thirds of the Committee to be men practically acquainted with the trade. Profits, after paying fixed charges and interest on capital at a rate not exceeding 5 per cent., to be divided as follows :—

20	per cent.	to Customers in proportion to purchases.
10	,,	a Reserve Fund.
5	,,	a Social Fund.
2	,,	an Educational Fund.
3	,,	a Special Service Fund.
60	,,	Capital and Labour, to be divided in proportion to their respective amounts.

[Thus, if in a given period Wages were £600 and Interest on Capital £20, then if 60 per cent. of profits amounted to £31, that would give one shilling in the £ on Wages and Interest, so that Labour would receive £30 and Capital £1 of the amount available, and so in proportion whatever the amount might be.]

The complete change in the constitution of the Society was justified by results. Members came in with share capital, loan capital was secured, and trade grew to the extent of compelling

removal to larger premises in March 1892. The Society is now actively canvassing for trade in the co-operative market, and not without result, for business is secured sufficient to give hope to the men, whose belief in their cause and confidence in the future of their Society impelled them to work from the trying period of the first days through the difficult period of reconstruction. In the past, Bristol, like some other large shipping towns, has not taken kindly to co-operation, although, in late years, labour struggles have convulsed the city, and capital and labour, drawn up in battle array, have waited but the word to fall upon each other's hosts. Possibly co-operative effort in the town, small as it is in proportion to the industrial evils that exist, may yet here, as in other places, grow to such a size, in such a form, as to prove the earnestness of co-operators as industrial reformers, and their capacity as practical directors. The Bristol Pioneers' Boot and Shoe Productive Society will have done no small thing when its growth into success shows the workers in other trades in the town a more excellent method than they now practise.

		Capital.			
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Sales.	Profits.
1894	64	£412	£412	£2,655	£13

BRISTOL PIANOFORTE CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, 49 COLSTON STREET, BRISTOL.

This is a Co-operative Society formed by the workers in an old-established private business, the plant and stock of which were made over to them on favourable terms. The Society is trying to avoid the middleman and deal direct with the public. Its Pianos are now becoming well known in the co-operative movement.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1894	15	£381	£1,010	£4	£480	£45
1895	—	361	963	4	686	—
1896	16	362	963	—	868	—

BROMSGROVE NAIL FORGERS' CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, SIDEMOOR, BROMSGROVE.

In few places have there been more distress and suffering than in the chain and nail making districts. Here men, and women, and little children have laboured hard and long for pay too small to supply even a sufficiency of the things that members of civilised communities look upon as necessaries. Witnesses giving evidence before Parliamentary Committees, reports of Government Inspectors, newspaper representatives, and a host of others, have

borne testimony to the wretched condition of numbers of the workers engaged in and about the "Black Country." For a day or two now and then public attention has been given to these things, and it has almost seemed as if the public conscience would enforce a more humane organisation of these industries now carried on upon conditions that should "move the stones . . . to rise and mutiny," and would move men if their hearts had not sickened in despair. Little has been done, the public is busy, it is composed of individuals much engrossed with their own affairs, who are unable to do more than sympathise with the sufferings of others. Besides, the public, if it attempted direct assistance, could only give money, and money gifts, while they might prove the givers' generosity, would effect no improvement so long as the present want of system endures in the conduct of these trades. Each trade must be made to pay for itself, not with an income partly made up of doles and alms, but growing out of the results of improved organisation. Any attempt towards this, no matter how small or tentative, will be welcomed by all those who wish for better things, and do not accept an evil thing as inevitable and irremovable because it exists. The Bromsgrove Nail Forgers are engaged in an attempt to improve the conditions of their trade, and the figures given below will show that their efforts have not been without success. More than two-thirds of the trade comes from co-operative societies; the co-operative boot workshops of course use quantities of nails. The number of workers employed is now about 60.

			Capital.				
Year.		Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891	...	145	£280	—	£43	£398	£21
1896	...	121	415	£21	110	1,571	151

BROWNFIELD'S GUILD POTTERY SOCIETY LIMITED,

COBRIDGE, STOKE-ON-TRENT.

Manufacturers of all kinds of China and Earthenware, from the most artistic and expensive goods to the cheapest articles of ordinary utility.

The potter is engaged in one of the oldest industries of the world. The evidences of his industry are found wherever men have lived in communities tending towards civilisation. In countries where commercialism has not yet altered the old order, the potter's wheel in its ancient primitive form still turns the ware the people use. In England the potter's workshop has developed into the factory, where ware of all kinds is turned out with a rapidity that intensifies from day to day. Many things have

changed, and all changes have not been for the best. It is well that everything should be done to place an improved product within the reach of the humblest purse, but it is not well that production should be carried on under conditions with which the public are now well aware, where poisonous glazes and dust poison the bodies of the workers and sink them into premature decay. In Staffordshire, justly celebrated for the variety, excellence, utility, and beauty of its pottery, there are districts where the proportion of sick workers is so heavy as to be beyond the resources the locality can bring to cope with it. The feeling between employers and employed is not good. Constant disputes about wages and details of organisation dislocate the trade. Every one with close knowledge of the trade appears to agree that it is in a critical condition, and all the three hundred firms carrying on their business in the district of the Potteries complain of the difficulty in making both ends meet. Under these conditions, while local public opinion was intensely excited about the local industry, Mr Arthur Brownfield promulgated his plan for turning the large works under his direction into a co-partnership Co-operative Society. "Brownfield's" is one of the chief firms in the trade, long established, with a wide reputation, and employing about 400 workers. When the conversion of the business into a Co-partnership of Labour was proposed, the assets of the firm were valued by chartered valuators at £20,000, including £4,500 guaranteed book debts. £10,000 of this was Mr Brownfield's own interest in the business, but as, in his opinion, the value of the business had depreciated owing to the retirement of the old firm from business, he sold his share to the new Society for £6,000 as practically irremovable capital, not to be withdrawn so long as any indebtedness exists to those outside the factory; this capital to receive 5 per cent. interest, but not until every other claim out of profits has been satisfied. The workers accepted the offer with enthusiasm; they took up shares freely; the trade unions of the district subscribed £1,550; workers in other pottery-ware firms invested £736; railway workers invested £650. There is evidently no lack of faith amongst the people on the spot. In 1895 Co-operative societies had taken shares amounting to £1,820, and had also invested £2,225 on loan, and many more are giving trade. The first year's work was an anxious time, for a new class of business had to be undertaken—the making of goods suitable for co-operative stores.

The Society was registered in October 1892. The rules provide that after providing for necessary charges and paying

6 per cent. on capital other than loan stock, the profits remaining will be divided into 25 per cent. to customers and 75 per cent. to workers, subject to deductions of 10 per cent. for a sick fund and 10 per cent. to augment the wages of women and young persons. Profits accruing to workers to be credited to their share account. The rule concerning committee is now amended, to give a definite share of representation to co-operative societies and trades unions where shareholders. Previously the committee was drawn from the workers.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1893 ...	717	£14,056	£1,672	£197	£19,100	£687
1894 ...	743	15,146	1,693	—	20,292	973
1895 ...	750	16,654	4,255	671	21,739	762

BURNLEY SELF-HELP COTTON SPINNING MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LTD., HEALY-ROYD MILLS, BURNLEY; AND 19 MARSDEN SQUARE, MANCHESTER.

Calicoes, Flannelettes, Silesias, Lustres, &c.

As the construction of the cotton industry is perhaps the greatest of England's accomplishments in her share of the "Industrial Revolution" that has changed the methods of work and the life of the worker wherever its leaven has begun to ferment in the old world and the new, so, too, is it one of the most difficult to operate in successfully. Yet notwithstanding the difficulties, experiments have already been made—as might be expected from the character of the cotton factory workers—in co-operative industry in various forms, with varying results, sometimes started in wrong places, sometimes started for the workers instead of by them. In the case of the Burnley Self-Help Society the initiative came from the workers themselves. They formed the Society on the basis of all workers being members required to find a considerable share of the capital that employed them, and sharing the profits on labour, government being vested in a committee elected chiefly from the workers. The capital was found, the Society registered, and work commenced. The way was not easy; people who, like the cotton operatives, are accustomed to a hard life, always driven at high speed on fast-working machinery, fighting for work, fighting for better pay, do not at once easily settle down into the homogeneous mass required for success in co-operative industry. It takes time to shake into place under new conditions, but in this, as in any collective enterprise, success may come at last if there are some persistent people faithful to the cause. The Society has seen many anxious moments, but it lives, and this, as the witty Abbé

pointed out, is what many others have failed to do. It not only lives but grows in usefulness. The range and variety of products is extended, and the quality maintained. The rate of wages paid is the standard list of the trade. The great cotton strike cost the Society nearly £1,000, spent in running the mill, the workpeople being constantly employed while other weaving businesses closed.

The Society is still housed in Healy-Royd Mills, where it first started. Instead of relying solely upon a chance market, the management are developing a home trade with Co-operative Stores, a market whose requirements they have many facilities for studying, and which they are supplying satisfactorily. A large proportion of profits is given to customers in this department. For the last half-year the trade was £33,832 shipping and £9,664 home. The trading has proved profitable. A notable extension has lately been made; the mill has been much enlarged, and is now one of the largest and best appointed in the town, and the Society has taken roomy premises at Marsden Square, in a good business district in Manchester, and here a good stock can be kept, the great variety of goods the Society makes can be shown, and orders executed promptly.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891 ...	259	£4,774	£1,738	£679	£51,591	£336
1896 ...	330	7,620	14,081	719	78,523	—

BARWELL CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, BARWELL, NEAR HINCKLEY.

About five years since eleven workers in the boot and shoe trade at Barwell drew up a set of rules, and formed themselves into a Co-operative Society to carry on production on the basis of co-partnership of labour, with the division of profits between labour, capital, and custom, each member being required to hold five £1 shares. Interest on capital is 5 per cent. per annum. The division of profits, 10 per cent. to capital, 40 per cent. to workers, 20 per cent. to custom. They had then £55 capital, and after increasing this amount they started business, having at first some discouraging experiences. The first six months' working showed a loss of £42, while their capital had grown to £207. The next three months' work resulted in a profit of £12. 12s. 5d., and the capital had become £255. They then determined to raise the minimum number of shares required to be held from £5

to £10, thus ensuring that for some time the share capital would be steadily strengthened by subscriptions and profit written to share account. After the next six months' working it was found that a profit of £51. 7s. 1d. had been made, which enabled them to clear off the previous deficit, place £5 to reserve fund, and pay 2d. in the £ to labour and custom. Business has been secured from a number of distributive societies, and the Committee have confidence in the future of the Society. The trade of the half-year just concluded shows an improvement. The increased capital has enabled the Society to purchase its raw material to better advantage. The business has been moved to other premises, a suitable place built, and the necessary capital is coming in well. In order to maintain confidence in its affairs, the Society decided to have its accounts examined in future by a public auditor.

			Capital.				
Year.		Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891	...	49	£207	—	—	£1,656	—
1896	...	99	1,092	£1,404	£235	6,323	£411

CANTERBURY CO-OPERATIVE TANNERS LIMITED, STOUR STREET, CANTERBURY.

Registered in December 1895, the history is short but not uneventful. Action was precipitated by the manager losing his employment under circumstances made public in *Labour Co-partnership* at the time, and much commented on. Thrown suddenly into the work of organising the business before they had quite wished to begin, the conductors of the Society faced the problem with vigour, with results as follows—the shares taken at the time were £670, and loan capital £335. At the end of June there were 81 members, including 3 societies. Not much work has been turned out yet, as since business was decided upon three months have been used in laying down the plant and fitting the premises which the Society have taken by the river Stour, which supplies water very suitable for tanning. It is notoriously a trade where the process of manufacture is more lengthy than in others, and of course the Society has had to wait some time before getting the first batches of work through. Sales are now beginning, and this will bring some capital back to be used again, but it is a slow process, and as a matter of fact the Society's operations are very much hampered by lack of capital.

			Capital.		
Year.		Members.	Share.	Loan.	Trade.
1896	... ...	94	£724	£495	£584

COVENTRY CO-OPERATIVE WATCH MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, 35 MOUNT ST., COVENTRY.

Gold and Silver Watches, Guards; Watch materials used in the trade.

The Society was established in 1876 by a few working-men. At first profits were divided into three parts, one part going to capital, in addition to 7½ per cent. interest; but in 1887 and 1888 the rules were revised, interest on share capital was reduced to 5 per cent. per annum, and on loans to 3¾ per cent. per annum, the remaining profits, after providing for depreciation and education, being divided equally between labour and custom. All profits, instead of being paid out, are turned into transferable shares, each member being required to hold five shares.

The governing body is a committee consisting almost entirely of practical watchmakers, and they have directed the Society well. In 1877 there were thirty-one members, with a capital of £108, and the year's trading showed a profit of £2. Since then the Society has made steady progress, and finds much support amongst the Co-operative Stores, who are their agents.

The Society, along with other manufacturers in Coventry, has taken steps to meet the new conditions in the trade, and has put £200 towards a joint manufactory for making "watch movements," and thus has improved its capacity for turning out large quantities of reliable work.

The figures for 1892 and since show how the Society felt the effects of depression, and the loss on the year was serious, but seeing that the Reserve Fund was £683 while the total capital was £2,167, the friends of the Society had no cause for fear, and the figures for this year show a good recovery.

			Capital.				
Year.		Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891	...	104	£1,904	£92	£658	£3,514	£321
1896	...	93	1,746	24	568	3,973	348

DESBOROUGH CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, DESBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

This Society was registered in 1892. It grew out of the desire some of the men working in the town had to extend to Desborough the benefits of co-operative industry. The men who started it were members of the trade union, and went round and talked to their friends until enough members had been got together to form a Society. The rules provide that a member must hold five £1

shares in the Society. No individual member may have more than £100 in the Society, of which only £25 shall be in shares, and the remainder in loan capital. The committee consists of president, secretary, treasurer, and twelve committee-men; at least eight of the number must have practical acquaintance with some branch of the trade; each department of the works is, so far as possible, to be represented on the committee. Workers are eligible for committee. Any one appointed to an official position in the Society after joining the committee must vacate his seat on the committee, but is immediately eligible for re-election. Profits to be divided as follows:—Workers, 40 per cent.; Committee, 5 per cent.; Social and Educational Fund, 2½ per cent.; Provident Fund, 5 per cent.; Capital, 7½ per cent.; and Customers, 40 per cent.

The First Annual Report, 30th December 1893, notified a loss of £135. 5s. 6½d., mostly made in the first half of the year when the Society was getting under way. At the end of the year matters improved. That the improvement was maintained appears in the Report for the five months ending 26th May 1894, during which time sales were £900. 2s. 1d., and profits £53. 2s. 10d.

Most of the trade is got from Co-operative Stores, and they are now investing share and loan capital with the Society. The Desborough Store invested £100 in the early days of the workshop, and has since helped well towards the new factory that the Boot Society soon needed, and is now occupying.

			Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profit.	Loss.
1893 ...	86	£303	£35	—	£387	—	£154
1894 ...	83	365	95	—	2,459	£138	—
1895 ...	95	551	252	£15	4,520	142	—

DUDLEY BUCKET AND FENDER CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, Charlotte Street, Dudley.

Manufacturers and Galvanisers. Buckets, Baths, Pails, Watering-pans, Boiler-fillers, Coal-hods, Skeps, Cowls, Fenders, Umbrella-stands, Ash-pans, Trivets, &c. &c.

It sometimes happens that those who most need help are hardest to aid. So in the industrial world those who most need improved organisation to obtain better conditions, appear to be the most difficult to bring into line and keep there. It is a slow work to organise those whose life has been passed in a trade where wages are low, hours long, and employment irregular. As these conditions rule in some of the Black Country industries, it is a good thing that this Society is succeeding, because it thereby

not only benefits its own people, but gives an example to workers in worse paid trades around. There was a galvanising society in Dudley before this one, but its affairs did not prosper, and while it was in a time of difficulty, such as beset most young businesses, one of the creditors got a winding-up order. But some of the members were not disheartened. They believed that with better management a Co-operative Society could be made to pay. They therefore started the present Society, bought the patterns, fixtures, and stock from the liquidator of the former one, and set to work with them in a workshop, with lower standing charges than their forerunners had been content with. The results have justified their courage. At first it was difficult to gain the confidence of customers, who thought the new Society would fail as the previous one had done. Slowly, however, confidence was regained, and the Society is now doing well.

Registered in March 1888, the Society had then a share and loan capital of £335, and eight members. It was hard to get more members, for the failure of the other Society had discouraged many. The first nine months' trade was £853, it showed a loss of £36; but in 1889 the trade was £3,009, and a profit of £143 was made after clearing off the loss just mentioned. The number of workers is 70. Trade union wages are paid. For the first nine months the weekly wages bill averaged £6. 13s.; the average for last year was ten times that.

			Capital.			
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1892 ...	21	£985	—	£269	£7,408	£561
1895 ...	56	1,640	£610	204	11,960	994
1896 ...	71	2,040	1,568	228	14,379	1,155

GENERAL BUILDERS LIMITED, 15 Southampton Row, W.C.; Works, The Avenue, Tottenham.

Unlike the other societies described here, the General Builders' Society not only has, like other co-operative workshops, its central office and works, but also several branches for the enlistment and organisation of members. The need for special treatment of some trades when organised for production on a co-partnership basis is realised no doubt by all who study the matter. The building trade, fluctuating from district to district, and carried on by men of many different trades, cannot so easily be managed in one factory as other trades are, and a necessity arises for taking members from widely separated places and yet giving them some share in the government of their Society. This is done in the General Builders' Society by the system of electing from the

branches delegates who form a council from which the executive committee is elected. The Society started work last year, and after doing several important jobs, has just secured the contract to build new premises for a co-operative distributive society in a London suburb; the job when completed will amount to about £2,400, and this will no doubt be completed satisfactorily, as the work previously undertaken by the Society has been.

The members represent all parts of the trade—carpenters and joiners, bricklayers, plumbers, masons, plasterers, painters, labourers, &c.; and a wide constituency of good workmen cannot fail to be a strength to the Society.

GENERAL ENGINEERS LIMITED, 1A VICEROY ROAD, SOUTH LAMBETH, LONDON.

Registered in 1894. The Society's Rules state the special object of the Society is "to carry on the trades of metal-working and engineering in all their branches"; one of the special rules runs, "The Society shall work under Trade Union rules. Forty-eight hours shall constitute a normal week's work to the persons employed by the Society." Profits are to be divided between provident fund, 15 per cent.; educational fund, 10 per cent.; special service fund, 5 per cent.; committee, 10 per cent.; share capital, 15 per cent.; employés, 45 per cent. Workers, to participate in profits, must have worked one hundred hours during the period to which the division relates. The share of profit accruing to workers and to capital is to be credited to share account until the persons interested hold £50 in shares in the Society. A member is only required to take up one share by his own payments, though probably no one who worked for the Society would show so little public spirit as to take up only one share.

A little while after starting work the Society, by the advice of a friend, commenced the manufacture of bicycles. Notwithstanding the difficulties inherent on taking up such a peculiar trade, the Society made a good beginning, and the committee will no doubt prepare themselves with a good equipment of plant and material for the opening of next season's bicycle trade. As showing the way co-partnership societies can help each other, the General Engineers did a good deal of work in fitting up the new premises of both the Co-operative Institute Society and the Leather Manufacturers' Society.

As this is the first Co-operative Society to make bicycles, there is every chance to build up a good trade with co-operative stores who sell numbers of the "iron steed."

GLENFIELD "PROGRESS" CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LTD., STATION ROAD, GLENFIELD, LEICESTER.

Ladies' and Girls' Boots and Shoes.

This Society was registered in 1892, "to carry on the trade of manufacturing and selling various kinds of boots and shoes or other coverings for the feet." The shares are £1 each, and no member may hold more than £100 in the shares of the Society. The committee consists of president, secretary, and twelve committee-men; each committee-man must have been a member for at least twelve months. The president, secretary, and at least eight committee-men must have a practical acquaintance with some branch of the trade, and as far as is possible each branch of the trade is to be represented on the committee in proportion to its importance. A member of the committee who accepts an appointment to any official position in the works of the Society thereupon vacates his seat, but is eligible for re-election. The manager may be a member of the committee, but cannot fill the office of president or secretary. Interest on capital is 5 per cent., and if not paid in a bad year is a first charge on the next profits. The net profit is divided—40 per cent. to workers *pro rata* on wages; 12 per cent. to committee; 5 per cent. to a social and educational fund; 10 per cent. to a provident fund; 3 per cent. for special services; 10 per cent. to capital; 20 per cent. to customers. Profits accruing to workers are credited to the share account of the person interested.

Business was commenced in 1893. The Society has now its own specially built new factory, the money for which was advanced by the village store.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1893 ...	69	£192	£71	—	£1,554	—
1896 ...	115	612	231	£124	5,354	£428

HEBDEN BRIDGE FUSTIAN MANUFACTURING CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, NUTCLOUGH WORKS, HEBDEN BRIDGE.

Manufacturers of Fustians, Velveteens, Cords, and Moles of all kinds.

Hebden Bridge has long been a centre of the fustian manufacture, the water of the locality being naturally favourable for a good finish of the material; and the condition of the trade in the district during the last thirty years is well pictured by Mr Joseph

Greenwood in his paper on "The Formation of the Hebden Bridge Society." The trade had for some time been much disturbed. The relations between employers and employed were bad. There was much suffering amongst the workpeople; and when one of their number, an old and feeble man, died of over-exertion and excitement after carrying too heavy a load of work, he had to be buried by subscription; and when this had been done, his workmates began to form a sort of Friendly Society to meet cases of the kind. At the beginning they fixed the contribution at threepence per week, and it was understood that the funds would be used towards setting up a fustian cutting and dyeing establishment. About thirty joined, and formed from themselves delegations to canvass other workshops in the neighbourhood. Rules were framed, and registered in 1870. The founders were all poor men, and could only subscribe small sums out of their scanty wage, but they continued their subscriptions, and when the sum in hand was about £10 it was invested in the Co-operative Store in the town. One of their early resolutions was to the effect that, "The objects of the Society shall be to find employment for its members by the manufacture and sale of fustians," &c. They estimated that the sum of £1,000 would enable them to buy a dyeing plant and rent a place to carry on the work. The prospect of obtaining that sum seemed remote, but the pioneers were not discouraged. They rented a small upper room over a passage, ten feet by ten, devoting spare time to fitting up the few fixtures they could afford, buying the boards and making the shelves which served to hold their small stock. Continuing to canvass and hold meetings after the ordinary day's work was done, they found that at the end of the first quarter the subscribed capital was £37. 7s. 11d. They began to do work. This was divided amongst the members at the usual rate of payment, and the value of the work added to the worker's share account. They had calculated from the beginning that the local stores would be their customers, and patterns of the goods were sent by post to towns that could not be reached by walking after the day's work was done.

The Society had now about sixty members, although some of the original men had fallen away, as always happens in every struggle. It was found difficult to develop a trade in cloth only, and the new beginners had to undertake the manufacture of ready-made garments, so they set to work on this too, and found it no easy task. At the end of the first half-year (1870) there were ninety-five members; the capital was £82. 18s. 3d.; the trade had been £55, and the profit £3. 1s. 8d.

From these small things the Society has grown into its present strong position, always watched and guided by men strong in the faith. And in such matters as these sincerity is not proved only by constant repetition of catch words and declarations of principles. If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, so unceasing watchfulness is the price of business success. Ideals have to be infused into everyday conduct and expressed in small details. If it does not at first blush sound very romantic when we are told that in 1874 they extended the business, and opened a dyeing-shop, and in 1886 they had built a new place, and began to weave their own fustians, yet these are solid proofs of progress, showing that belief in the co-operative ideal, and desire for industrial amelioration, is not incompatible with practical capacity.

The following figures will show the progress of the Society:—

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1870 ...	95	£83	£3	—	£55	£3
1895 ...	797	25,845	6,771	£3,859	43,569	5,185
1896 ...	822	26,417	6,471	3,937	46,646	4,774

The profits accruing to workers are credited to share account until they have £20 invested in the Society. The total share of profit allocated to labour in 1894 was £642, at the rate of 1s. in the £ on £12,851 wages. The average number of workers employed during the year was 294. Of the 797 members on the books at the end of 1895, there were 300 co-operative societies, 297 workers, and 200 outside shareholders. The capital was held in the following proportions:—Societies, £10,415; workers, £7,398; outside shareholders, £8,032. During the year £60 was voted for education.

HIGHAM FERRERS CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LTD., HIGHAM FERRERS, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Towns have their youth and age, they grow and decay, and are changed by causes often beyond the control of their citizens. Higham Ferrers had a corporate existence in days when some of the young and prosperous towns near it now had made no sign of their future importance. The formation of co-operative societies in the place, for distribution and production, shows that the people are not relying upon the past, but determined to take their share in the modern movement which co-operation represents in industry. The Society is yet young, but it is making fair progress. The rules were registered in 1892, and they provide that each member

shall hold at least ten shares, and each member is required to pay one shilling weekly until the ten shares are paid. No member may hold more than £25 share and £25 loan capital. As in several societies, provision is made that a large proportion of the committee must be practically acquainted with some branch of the trade, and that each branch shall be represented. Interest on capital is 5 per cent., and when loss in trading prevents its being paid, it is a first charge on next year's profits. Profits are allotted to—Workers, 40 per cent.; committee, 12 per cent.; social and educational fund, 3 per cent.; provident fund, 10 per cent.; for special services, 5 per cent.; capital, 10 per cent.; customers, 20 per cent. All profit accruing to workers is carried to share account. The following figures are for six months' trade only :—

			Capital.			
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Trade.	Profit.
1894 ...	47	£245	£170	£1,082	£40
1896 ...	56	371	119	4,377	127

HINCKLEY BOOT PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED,

JOHN STREET, HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE.

Ladies' and Children's Boots and Shoes.

Hinckley has specialised in bootmaking, and, like other towns in the trade, confines itself to a certain class of goods. The Society was started by ten men, who wished to introduce the co-operative method into the boot industry of the town. They had been partly moved to action by a strike lasting nine weeks.

The rules provide for a committee which must consist of men practically acquainted with the trade, each branch being represented in proportion to its importance; the general meetings to make regulations securing this from time to time. Workers are eligible for committee. Profits remaining after providing for interest on capital at the rate of 7½ per cent. to be divided as follows :—30 per cent. to workers, 5 per cent. to Social and Educational Fund, 15 per cent. to Reserve Fund, 10 per cent. to Share Capital, and 40 per cent. to customers. Workers' profits are capitalised as shares. Starting with £200 capital, registered in 1890, the Society, in issuing its first half-yearly balance-sheet, showed the trade was £436, producing a profit of 19s. 4½d., not a large amount, but much could not be expected in a term that includes all the difficulties of inauguration. The Society suffered from a disastrous fire in September 1891, when it suffered not only the loss in the fire, but an enforced idleness of a month before the business could be settled in a new place. During the first eighteen

months' working, little advance was made, but after that progress was more rapid, as the following returns for three consecutive half-years will show :—

	Half-Year ending		
	2nd Jan. 1892.	2nd July 1892.	24th Dec. 1892.
Capital	£270	£297	£308
Trade	1,573	1,773	2,127
Profits	30	38	70
Bonus to Labour	5d. in £	7d. in £	7¼d. in £
Dividend to Customers ...	2d. ,,	2⅛d. ,,	4¼d. ,,
Bonus to Shareholders ...	—	—	5⅛d. ,,
Reserve Fund	£1. 8s.	£7	£18

It was found impossible to conduct the business in the old workshop, and a new one has been built, light, roomy and convenient.

			Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1892 ...	33	£308	—	£17	£3,901	£126
1895 ...	61	570	£477	115	5,212	217
1896 ...	60	753	1,830	125	6,568	129

IRISH CO-OPERATIVE AGENCY SOCIETY LIMITED,

LIMERICK.

Wholesale agents for the Irish Co-operative Creamery productions.

Agriculturists all over the United Kingdom are complaining of the hardness of their lot. Much suffering there no doubt is, but no small portion of it could be removed by agriculturists themselves. Separated in their work, each set apart on his own large or small piece of land, they have lagged behind other sections of the community in adopting methods of co-operation which would make them better able to cope with the troubles that beset them. In the making of butter, for instance, many countries have been far in front of us in the use of improved machinery and appliances operated in places specially suited for the work carried on in them.

We are making haste to repair the inroads made in our butter trade by better-equipped foreign competitors. Ireland has given the most striking example of what can be done in a few years to revivify a national industry. The Irish butter trade had suffered severely. There had been some attempts to introduce large dairies on joint-stock principles, but this does not give the farmer very much assistance. When the dairy belongs to outside shareholders who take the profit themselves, the farmer only gets the price of his milk, while the profit on butter-making slips from his hands. The co-operative dairies remedy this. While the holder of a small plot of land with only a few cows could not alone

profitably use a complete set of modern machinery, he can join others in purchasing it by means of a co-operative society, and they can use it jointly. Then the machinery is set up in suitable premises centrally situated in the district from which supplies are drawn. The farmers who are members send in the milk from their farms. The milk is weighed and tested, and is paid for in proportion to what the test shows it to be worth. The milk is worked up together with great care, and an evenly made product is the result; and thus we have what buyers require, a butter on which they can rely for regularity as well as quality.

At the end of the year the profits made by these operations are divided between the members who supply the milk and those who work in the dairy. The committee of management is of course drawn from the members, and they appoint a responsible man to take charge of the dairy, receive the milk, test it, and see it properly made up and sent out. The butter thus produced has gained a high reputation already, and is rapidly winning its way into the English market. There were 67 of these co-operative dairies at the end of 1895, and their output was about £200,000. A large proportion of the trade was transacted through the Agency Society, which has been formed to do the work of joint agent and canvasser. It has agents in London, Manchester, &c.

The work of propaganda and organisation has been carried on with great energy. Agriculture is Ireland's foremost interest, and anything done to improve its material condition and develop the character of those employed in it must have far-reaching effects for good. This the co-operative dairies have already accomplished to a gratifying extent, and their work justifies hope for still greater things in the future.

KEIGHLEY IRONWORKS SOCIETY LIMITED, GOULBORNE STREET, KEIGHLEY.

Wringing and Washing Machines (in about twenty patterns), Umbrella Stands, End Irons, Coal Savers, Kettle Stands, &c.

Established in 1885, the Society is now housed in its own freehold workshops, enlarged lately to double their previous capacity. The rules provide for the division of profits between labour, capital, and custom. The workers have representation on the managing committee.

In the North of England it is much more usual than in the South to see working-class homes provided with labour-saving machines for the domestic wringing and mangling.

The Society speaks with no uncertain voice against bad work, and strives to maintain the principle that "no mean thing should be done, and no bad work turned out." It is a good stand to take in a trade largely carried on upon other methods.

When the purchasing public takes interest in the conditions under which things are made and the methods by which they are sold, then this Society will receive far more support than it does now. Meanwhile the Society does well what trade it secures.

			Capital.				
Year.		Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891	...	185	£2,353	£1,739	£124	£5,628	£391
1895	...	209	3,670	2,500	244	6,444	558
1896	...	211	3,848	2,702	274	7,059	569

KETTERING CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, HAVELOCK WORKS, KETTERING.

No matter how much any important work needs to be done, it cannot get under way anywhere except in those places where men can be found who make their opportunities, see what they want, and know how to get it. It is not easy to make so complete an analysis of men's abilities and their surroundings as would enable us to say definitely, "Lo here," or "Lo there," is the cause of progress and the secret of success. It is not possible to show with scientific precision exactly why co-operative organisations flourish in some towns and not in others, although it is possible to do it in general terms. Thus, when we are asked why Kettering succeeds in organising a successful boot factory while other centres of the trade have not done so, the only true answer, which seems self-evident enough, is that there were men there who could do it.

The town, with a population of between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, is of a size easily permeated by an idea, the people are not too numerous to know each other, and all forms of working-class organisations are strong—the co-operative store, the trades unions, the friendly and temperance societies, all working vigorously.

Kettering possesses an ever-growing Co-operative Store, with 3,070 members in 1894, and a trade for the year of £57,613. It must have been an excellent example to the workers in the town, teaching in another way what the trades unions enforce, the value of combination with its necessary sacrifice of small immediate advantages in order to secure larger ones in the future. A store helps to accustom men to see large undertakings conducted for the general benefit, and quietly grows into the mind as an illustration

of the possibility for the workers to use the instruments of production for mutual benefit instead of leaving them to minister to private interest. So the men at Kettering came to the problem of mutual employment with minds prepared to work out plans and legislate for their stability, when in 1888 the Society was founded by about 140 men employed in the trade, who adopted rules which after recent amendment now read as follows:—After providing for depreciation and interest on capital, the profits are divided in the proportion of—

40	per cent.	to Workers	—divided *pro rata* on Wages.
40	,,	,, Customers	,, ,, ,, Purchases.
5	,,	,, Managing Committee.	
5	,,	,, Provident Fund.	
2½	,,	,, Educational Purposes.	
7½	,,	,, Capital.	

It will be seen that, very wisely, the Managing Committee receive "payment by results." The way in which the division of profits works out is well shown in the balance-sheet for the six months ending 1st July 1896, when, after providing for all charges, including 5 per cent. interest on Share and Loan Capital, and making a special depreciation of buildings and machinery on the Committee's advice, there remained £1,050. 13s. 9d. for distribution, and this was disposed of in the following manner:—

To Workers ...	£403	8	6	being 1/9 in the £ on wages.
,, Customers	416	5	7	,, 7d. ,, ,, trade.
,, Committee ...	35	0	0	
,, Capital	58	3	9	,, 9d. ,, ,, shares.
,, Education Fund	26	5	0	
,, Provident Fund	52	10	0	

Leaving £59. 0s. 11d. to carry to Reserve.

Each member is required to hold five shares and may not hold more than twenty-five; after reaching that amount any further addition he makes to his investment is credited to loan account to the extent of another £25, receiving 5 per cent. per annum and not sharing in the bonus on transferable shares.

The Society is directed by a committee of twelve, with a president, treasurer, and secretary, and the undertaking directed under their care has walked well from the first. After two years' working the business had outgrown its early home. A plot of freehold land was purchased, and a factory erected at a cost of £1,600. The trade has developed so rapidly as to fully use the larger premises, and further extensions will soon be needed. In view of this two freehold cottages adjoining the warehouse were purchased for £425; but it was found that this would

not give space for the rapidly growing business, so a large well-appointed factory has been bought, and there the Society will be able to settle down for the present. Under the profit-sharing rules every worker becomes a shareholder with a vote and is eligible for committee.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1889 ...	208	£1,032	—	—	£3,588	£328
1895 ...	590	4,217	£2,776	£517	26,255	2,103
1896 ...	651	4,890	3,786	652	29,204	2,001

KETTERING CLOTHING MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, EXCELSIOR WORKS, KETTERING.

Every description of men's, youths', and boys' clothing, ready-made and to measure.

Clothing has altered from the time when garments were made at home from local materials. The trade has changed from the days when the master tailor in the town, and the village tailor in the country, with their apprentices round them, and their journeymen whom they had trained, made the clothing in which their customers protected themselves from the weather or aired their magnificence. Even Jack of Newbury might gaze in wonder at the greatness of the trade. The clothing trade has been a favourite field of operation for the "sweater," owing to the absence of expensive and dependent machinery. It can be carried on at home, and has not therefore been so much forced into great factories. Every now and then we have light let in upon the places where even high-priced clothing is put together. Garments for this or that well-known person have been made up amidst dirt, insanitation, and disease. Many similar evils exist in the wholesale clothing trade where garments are cut by the score in a warehouse and made up outside. This leads to many evils, not the least of which is the absence of fixed rates of wages and hours.

Many factories there are, of course, where large numbers of people are employed. There, legislative enactments ensure fairly good sanitary conditions. The industrial question, however, is not solved by this means only, although the workers, it is true, begin to perceive in a factory that identity of interest which is hidden from them when they work at home, and make individual bargains.

The work has to be carried further, to the identification of the employer and employed, the saving for the workers in the business that employs them the results of good years to provide for bad ones. This the Kettering Clothing Society has set itself to do.

Based upon rules similar to those of the Kettering Boot Society described above, its members believe that improved organisation will enable them to compete with the "sweater." There is an excellent market in the co-operative stores, whose thousands of members would no doubt, when it is made possible, prefer to be clothed in garments made under good conditions. The first six months' operations more than fulfilled expectation, the premises taken to start with proving inconveniently small. The Society makes one more to add to the long list of productive societies that have built a factory. Trade for the first half-year was £2,275, showing a profit of £234. 13s. 7½d.; divided as follows:—To workers, £55. 6s., being 1s. 9d. in the £ on wages; to custom, £74, being 8d. in the £ on purchases; to Committee, £11. 14s.; to Educational Fund, £5. 17s.; to Provident Fund, £11. 14s.; to bonus on Transferable Shares, £14. 4s. 3d., equals 3¾ per cent.; and to Reserve Fund, £44. 17s. 2d. Trade for the first half-year of 1896 was £10,096.

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profit.
1894 ...	203	£1,315	£92	£94	£4,421	£478
1895 ...	370	2,810	950	139	11,531	882
1896 ...	487	3,958	1,783	229	18,895	1,412

LEICESTER "ANCHOR" BOOT AND SHOE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, New Evington, Leicester.

This Society is another instance of "specialisation" in the boot trade, where, as in other industries, manufacturers tend more and more to restrict themselves to one branch of their calling. It was formed to carry on the manufacture of very small children's boots and shoes. In the trade these goods are sometimes known as "nurseries." Few of us had thought, perhaps, that such small foot-gear is a not unimportant branch of the boot and shoe industry. Yet so it is, and the well-known productive society already established in the boot trade in the town (see page 37), instead of taking up this branch of trade themselves, very wisely left it to the specialists to manage, and gave them all the help they could.

The members of the Society practically have the field to themselves in the co-operative market, where there is no small number of infants to be shod in a constituency of more than a million members, mostly heads of families. In the beginning a few men in the trade discussed the possibility of starting a co-operative workshop, then they called a meeting by circulars; forty of those who came

promised to join in forming a Society, and a special committee was appointed to draw up rules. The rules provide that the committee shall be elected from those who have been members for at least twelve months before the election. All members are eligible for committee, but the Society has a rule concerning committee that is well worth considering. When a member of the committee accepts an official position in the Society as secretary, manager, treasurer, or foreman, he has to vacate his position as committee-man, but is immediately eligible for re-election. Members must of course hold one £1 share, and not more than 100. Where a working member holds less than ten shares, then profits accruing to him are added to his share account till he holds that number. The manager may be a member of committee, but cannot be president or treasurer.

After paying 5 per cent. on capital and fixed charges, profits are divided as follows:—Workers, 40 per cent.; Committee, 5 per cent.; Social and Educational Fund, 8 per cent.; Provident Fund, 12 per cent.; Capital, 10 per cent.; Customers, 25 per cent. Within five months of the first meeting the membership had increased to 70 with £140 capital, and the Society had started work. The first half-year's trade was £1,187. 17s. 5d., for which the Society sent out 16,250 pairs of boots and shoes, evidently small in price as well as in size. The loss on the half-year was £37. 8s. 2½d. In the second half-year—Trade, £1,550. 5s. 8d.; number of pairs sold, 21,450; profit, £48. 12s. 5¼d. Third trade return, ending 30th June 1894, was for fourteen weeks only, so as to get the half-yearly balance-sheets out at the end of June and December, showed trade, £980. 3s. 3d.; number of pairs, 13,068; and profit, £51. 0s. 11d. The Society now works in a convenient factory built for it.

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profit.
*1893 ...	109	£234	£70	—	£918	—
1894 ...	135	610	185	£20	2,390	£50
1895 ...	151	648	223	20	4,123	94
1896 ...	151	754	318	47	4,420	166

* These figures are for the six months ending 30th September 1893.

LEICESTER CO-OPERATIVE BOOT & SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, Western Road, Leicester.

Boots and Shoes. Special feature—Soundness of insoles and stiffening.

The Society was formed in the latter part of 1886 by about sixty working-men chiefly employed in the Leicester Boot and

Shoe Factory of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, where the workers are engaged under the ordinary wage system. The promoters had much to contend with; not only the apathy of men, always the most serious obstacle in the path of progress, had to be overcome, but also the opposition of a number of people not without influence in the Co-operative movement. But the founders of the Society went on, progress might at first be difficult and slow, but, like Mirabeau, they refused to accept "that blockhead of a word, 'impossible.'"

They discussed and settled rules for the Society, making an earnest endeavour to put into workable shape their belief in the possibility of conducting industry on a popular basis, where all interests shall be considered from the common standpoint. These preliminary discussions must have had an excellent effect upon the men themselves, teaching them, what we all have to learn, that as we gain much by working with others, we must be prepared to sacrifice something, and practise that system of "give and take" which the helmsman uses in a rough sea.

The method of management and the division of profits are the outward and visible things that mark off most clearly the difference of competitive trade and co-operative industry, and show the difference in the ideas that animate them. In this Society, management is vested in a committee, with a president, treasurer, and secretary, elected at the general meeting by the workers themselves out of their own number. Profits are divided on a basis which is the result of a carefully considered attempt to treat the worker not only as an individual but also as a member of a community, and, therefore, while a share of profit is given to him individually, another portion is set aside for common purposes, as in the Provident and Educational Funds.

When the basis of the Society had thus been settled, they were free to concentrate themselves solely upon procuring capital and trade. The men put in whatever means they had of their own, they canvassed all their friends, and some responded; and in July 1887, with £220 in their name, they started work, employing four or five people. They were tried a little at first, their first quarter's balance-sheet showed a loss of £15, but on the second quarter's working this was replaced by a profit of £43, out of which the previous deficit was written off, and the remainder carried to reserve. These were anxious times for all engaged; the committee had not only to see that good work was turned out

and a market secured, but were constantly harassed by the exigencies of a growing business conducted with insufficient capital. They met the difficulties and overcame them. The business was well managed at home and well represented in the country amongst the Co-operative Stores, to whom solely they looked for trade. Although the members of the Society were not wealthy, and could not afford large premises at first, and worked under great disadvantage, yet they were not disheartened, but made up for it by increased activity, and adapted themselves to circumstances, looking forward to the days when they would adapt the circumstances to themselves. In time they grew out of the small premises that had seemed large enough to them at first, and moved into a roomy factory in Bede Street, where they fitted up workshops with new and improved machinery.

This factory in its turn became too small, and steps were taken to secure freehold land, whereon the Society built a place about three times as large as that previously occupied. This requires a larger capital than the Society then had, and in order to meet this a large amount of additional capital has been secured; and alterations are proposed to be made in the rules, which, when revised, will require every worker to hold not less than twenty £1 shares, and of the profits accruing to workers half will be added to share account until the required sum is complete. It is perhaps well that this has been taken in hand just at a time when there is urgent need of capital, but in any case it would have to be done in the future if the workers wish to keep the direction of their industry in their own hands, for they can hardly expect outsiders to furnish increased capital without demanding increased power. The workers of all trades can only secure themselves from outside domination by so arranging matters that each worker by his own subscriptions and his share of profits shall furnish a sensible proportion of the capital required to employ himself in his co-operative workshop.

The following figures show the progress of the Society into its present prosperous position. Prosperity is said to be for most of us a test even more severe than adversity. In the days of their success men at times forget the lessons of adversity and the principles they started with, and invent excuses for defection, but there has been no falling away here in principle, and we need have little fear for the business and social future of the Leicester Boot and Shoe Society so long as its members elect for the committee the men who have done the rough work of

the early days, and have guided it so well so far. Committees, of course, can only go so far as their mandate sends them, and it depends upon the members themselves to make the mandate wise and strong.

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1887 ...	220	£420	—	£20	£2,800	£230
1896 ...	1,070	9,879	£14,334	881	47,296	2,484

LEICESTER CO-OPERATIVE HOSIERY SOCIETY LIMITED, CRANBOURNE MILLS, LEICESTER.

Woollen and Merino Hosiery and underwear in all kinds; Jersey Suits and Cardigan Jackets.

The Society began in 1876 with a capital of £30, and its first workshop was in a cottage. At that time it was much easier than it is now to start in a small way, for then a large portion of the output came from hand frames, worked at home or in small workshops. The Society struggled on in face of many difficulties—want of trade, want of capital. By persistent activity in canvassing, trade began to come in, and then the committee felt all the difficulty of conducting a growing trade with insufficient capital, and during the first two years there was often lack of funds for wages on Saturday. Friends were appealed to for assistance, and were not found unwilling to help. Then another difficulty had to be overcome. The conditions of manufacture in the hosiery trade were changing. Machinery driven by steam was displacing the hand frames, and it was found that if the Society was to maintain its position, it too must have the best and newest machinery, or be beaten in the race. The gravity of the position was recognised, and the solution taken up with vigour. Every effort was made to secure capital, and not without success—the distributive societies responded, and the new machinery was put in. This involved the displacement of hand workers, most of whom were shareholders, who, had they chosen, could have opposed the alteration, but instead they wisely assented, and as far as possible were employed on the power machines. Up to 1896 the Society spent in all £15,500 in fitting its factory with machinery of the most modern type. Some of these machines cost £600 each, and in this co-operative factory 30 per cent. more labour is employed on these machines than in other places in the town. The following statistics, since published by the Society, show the difference in the results of the old and new systems:—

Total profit on three half-years, January 1884 to July 1885 (on the old machines)	£43 11 0
Wages paid	2,671 16 9
Trade	9,963 0 0
Total profit on three half-years, July 1885 to December 1886 (on improved machines)	403 1 0
Wages paid	3,886 8 8
Trade	14,141 0 0

At first the division of profits depended upon the decisions at members' meetings, but in 1882 rules were adopted determining the interest on capital at a fixed rate, and dividing profits, *pro rata* per pound, between customers and labour.

Always growing, the Society now operates in a capacious mill of its own, a freehold property. More machinery has lately been bought, and the buildings are being enlarged, and every effort is made to do work well and execute orders quickly. To facilitate despatch the Society holds over £10,000 stock.

The following figures show the growth of trade:—

Year.	Trade.
1st year—1877	£1,000

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891 ...	260	£6,416	£7,978	£680	£21,172	£628
1896 ...	660	18,008	12,327	1,450	48,885	2,802

LEICESTER CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING SOCIETY LIMITED, VAUXHALL STREET, LEICESTER.

Leicester is the home of several co-operative undertakings. The other co-partnership workshops in the town have sprung chiefly out of the determination of men in the trade affected to organise mutual employment. Not so the Printing Society. On 23rd January 1892 a meeting of combined trades unionists and co-operators was held to consider the furthering of co-operative production. After various trades had been suggested as likely openings, it was decided to organise the printing trade, and a committee was appointed to settle the plan. A public meeting was held on 7th May in the Co-operative Hall with good results, the shares applied for, together with those previously held, amounting to 80. As soon as sufficient capital was in hand, premises were secured and fitted with machinery. The business has grown rapidly. An enlargement of premises has just been effected that will give room to cope with the expanding trade.

The Society has been successful in securing the trade of the industrial organisations, and of course does work for the other societies in the town for which Leicester is becoming famous.

Among its more important undertakings the Society prints *Labour Co-partnership*, the organ of the co-partnership movement.

Year.		Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1893	...	115	£558	£182	£6	£424	£17
1894	...	120	800	308	10	1,186	96
1895	...	134	970	594	22	2,072	82
1896	...	149	1,270	1,046	79	2,659	195

LONDON PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, Co-operative Cocoa and Chocolate Makers. Works: Thames Ditton.

Specialties—"Nutritial Cocoa," and "Loproso Cocoa."

The Society was founded by a "lodge" of the Labour Association, and the promoters desired to work out a more generous system of "co-partnership of the workers," and more particularly to ameliorate the condition of some of that large class of workers who have to be described as "unskilled workers," not because they have no skill in the particular sort of work they happen to do, but because no term has yet been devised which will indicate correctly the nature of their calling. For instance, in the trade this Society carries on, a "packer" is one who puts the cocoa into packets ready for sending out, but this sort of "packer" would be unable to undertake the work of, say, a wholesale drapery house "packer," whose work consists in packing large parcels and heavy bales and cases. Now, in the cocoa trade, and indeed in most industries where a large number of small packages have to be made up and turned out rapidly, the work is done chiefly by young people, mostly girls. They are rarely well paid, have not any future to look forward to, for however painstaking and industrious they may be they cannot all secure adequately remunerated work at the same trade when they grow into maturity, there are not sufficient vacancies for them—the proportion of young people to older people is, in such industries, always very large. Most of the girls, of course, look forward to marriage, but any workshop will show that they do not all find husbands, and they have to struggle on, attempting to meet the larger wants of a woman out of the small wages of a girl. The boys employed in an industry of this kind are not able to work out a career for themselves, boy labour must be cheap or it will not be employed, and as soon as the boy sets a value on himself beyond the low scale of wages prevailing in the trade he must find a new sphere of activity. Thus there is a flow of young labour through the factory which makes it

difficult to organise from within for self-improvement, although obviously improvement is needed. Any attempt towards co-operative organisation, therefore, must be based on the assumption that the skilled workers who, though not numerous, are also required, will manage the business for the benefit of all employed. The rules provide that the Society shall be directed by a committee of seven, a secretary, and a president who shall be managing director. All workers to become members, all members to be eligible for committee. The rules provide for the division of profits in the following manner:—Three-tenths to the Workers *pro rata* on the amount of their wages; one-tenth to a Provident Fund; one-tenth to a Social and Educational Fund; one-tenth to the President as Managing Director; one-tenth to a fund for special services and for payment of Committee; two-tenths to Co-operative Societies acting as agents for the Society; one-tenth to Capital *pro rata* on the shares held by each member. The share of profits accruing to workers to be credited to share account. The factory at Thames Ditton was secured, and fitted with the best machinery. The Society's specialty, "Nutritial Cocoa," has grown steadily in favour, notwithstanding the difficulty of introducing a new specialty without costly advertising. More than 900 societies have become agents; the trade, being now at the rate of about £3,000 a year, could be easily extended if the Society had a larger capital to be used in producing further specialties. A large portion of the share and loan capital has necessarily been invested in acquiring the most efficient machinery and setting it up in a properly arranged factory.

THE LONDON CO-OPERATIVE LEATHER MANUFACTURERS' SOCIETY LIMITED, Leroy Street, Old Kent Road, London, S.E.

Established to carry on the business of Leather Manufacturers, Tanners, Dyers, Finishers, &c.

Bermondsey, with more than 80,000 inhabitants, is like many of the other towns that make up "the province covered with houses, called London," inasmuch as co-operation has yet made but small mark upon its life and thought. A co-operative store formerly did well for a while, but has since declined, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of a few men against their adverse surroundings. London is sometimes called a "co-operative desert," and indeed co-operation grows but sparely in its shifting sands. A prosperous exception is therefore doubly welcome; it is not only welcome for its own sake, but also because it serves as

a "light to lighten the Gentiles," where they sorely need it. Such an exception is the Leather Manufacturers' Society.

Bermondsey has long been noted for its leather industry; it receives materials from all the world, and makes them into leather —coloured, dressed, and prepared for every purpose.

South London has in the last few years shown many signs of active interest in the "Labour Question," and has roused itself from its former characteristic carelessness, and in Bermondsey one outcome has been the formation of this Society to operate in the special trade of the locality. In the end of 1890 a few of the more energetic men in the leather trade began to meet weekly to discuss the introduction of the co-operative method. They took six months to get their rules settled and registered—a time not wasted, for it must have enabled the men to review the whole question, and settle the form of their institution.

The Society was registered in 1891. Under the rules thus drawn up each member must hold five shares, the first share bearing no interest. The rules, as now amended, pay interest on the first as on the other shares. Workers elect three of their number to the committee, and are eligible for any office. Dividend on capital to be at a rate of not more than 5 per cent. per annum; and after providing for other charges, the profits are divided as follows:—First, 20 per cent. to a Common Fund. The remainder is divided thus:—10 per cent. to an Interest Guarantee Fund, until a sum equal to two years' interest on capital is in hand; 63 per cent. to workers; 9 per cent. to Committee; 3 per cent. to Special Service Fund; 5 per cent. to Educational Fund; and 10 per cent. to Provident Fund.

They continued their meetings through the time when the trade was convulsed by a strike for a nine hours' day, several of their members being refused work by their former employers owing to the prominent part they played in the strike. Thus impelled to more speedy action, they decided to start trading, and in August 1892 secured premises. They had then £173 capital, and began with a staff of four workers. In the first three months they had a hard fight, but held their ground, as the following figures will show:—

	Members.	Capital.	Trade.	Profits.
Quarter ending 30th September 1892 ...	42	£173	£123	£6
,, ,, 31st December 1892 ...	57	195	355	29
Half-year ,, 24th June 1893.....	62	367	1,497	67

There are now over fifty workers employed.

The Society is going well and strong, but it needs more capital. It has a splendid field open to it; it forms another link in the chain

of co-operative industry gradually being welded together, and, well managed, producing good work, may look with confidence for support in the co-operative market, where the workshops of the movement manufactured boots and shoes of the value, in 1892, of £451,654, representing a very large amount of leather of all kinds. From the first the Society was successful in getting trade from co-operative boot factories, the Wholesale Society, the Kettering, Leicester, and many other societies being regular customers. That the work done is good, and not dear, is shown by the fact that about half the Society's trade is done in the open market. The growth of business has made it necessary to get a new place, and in June last year the Society moved into larger premises.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1893 ...	64	£425	£168	£10	£3,197	£101
1896 ...	126	1,787	1,140	36	8,602	164

MEDWAY SHIP, BARGE, YACHT, AND BOAT BUILDING CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, The Tower, Borstal, near Rochester.

It cannot be contended that this Society has not to hold its own in the open market. That is sometimes argued against co-operative production by those who forget the facts of, for instance, the Walsall Padlock Society. The Medway Shipbuilding Society has no *clientele* of co-operative stores, for they do not use its productions. The Society makes headway notwithstanding. It was registered in 1892, to do not only building, but repairing, and the general work of the shipyard. All the workers are members; workers are eligible for the Committee of Management. After paying 5 per cent. interest on capital, the profits are apportioned: 40 per cent. to workers; 5 per cent. to a Provident Fund; 7½ per cent. on capital; 2½ per cent. to an Educational Fund; 40 per cent. to Custom; and 5 per cent. to the Committee of Management. The share of profit allotted to workers is credited to share account.

The last half-yearly report shows a steady increase of business, the work done having about equalled the amount transacted during the first nine months' operations in 1893. Many very gratifying testimonials have been received from customers, praising the work done for them. Orders have been secured which will keep the staff employed during the winter, and there seems every likelihood that co-operative production has gained a permanent foothold in one of our most important industries. The Society is still small,

and needs more capital; provided with this it could go steadily forward, enlarging its operations so as to undertake large and important work.

		Capital.					
	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1896 ...	76	£364	£490	£23	£360	£22

MIDLAND TINPLATE WORKERS' CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED.

Manufacturers of all kinds of Tinware, Trunks, &c.

Originally founded to find work for unemployed members of the trade society. The business is gradually being developed, and a good connection established with Co-operative Stores.

		Capital.					
	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891 ...	78	£917	—	—	£3,332	—
1892 ...	78	926	—	—	3,612	£88
1895 ...	65	932	—	—	3,995	161

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LTD., THRIFT STREET, WOLLASTON.

Manufacturers of Boots and Shoes. Established 1881.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Trade.	Profits.
1882 ...	16	£189	£83	£1,661	£129
1896 ...	54	1,212	774	5,534	—

NOTTINGHAM CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING SOCIETY LIMITED.

Owing to a number of causes Nottingham has not hitherto, either in distributive or productive co-operation, done quite so largely for co-operation as some other Midland towns, but there are signs that the day of small things is passing away, the store is growing into strength again, and trials are being made in productive co-operation. The Nottingham Co-operative Printing Society is a successful example of this forward movement. Though young, only recently started, and therefore unable to make a great show of statistics against the older societies, it has given signs of healthy growth. In one or two points it differs in its rules from some of the other co-partnership societies. For instance, all the share of profit accruing to workers is to be credited to their share account; and also in the division of profits 20 per cent. is set aside as a fund for "extension of business." Once a successful example is established in the town, there is little doubt that Nottingham, like some neighbouring towns, will do a good share of the work of organising industry on a co-partnership basis. The Printing Society has made a good beginning that should give co-operators in the town encouragement to proceed.

CO-OPERATIVE PADLOCK SOCIETY LIMITED, NEALE STREET, WALSALL.

Padlocks and Keys; "Lever," "Tumbler," "Backspring" Iron Padlocks, Lever Brass Padlocks, Cabinet Locks, in numerous patterns, for all markets, home and abroad, Cart-Gear, Chains, &c.

Sole manufacturers of the Fletcher Patent Padlock, No. 8,032. The pin on which the key revolves is square, with key to match. Great security is offered by this, since no ordinary key can be inserted in the lock. It is made in several qualities.

Like many successful ventures, this Society was launched in a time of trouble and tumult, dating its commencement from a strike in the trade which took place in 1872. There had been constant friction, the victory going from one side to the other, an advantage gained to-day, lost to-morrow. At length some of the men, weary of the constant attack and reprisal, proposed that funds hitherto used for strikes should be converted into capital for a co-operative workshop. With the subscriptions of the men who approved, and investments from local trades unions, a capital of £80 was made up. The rules they formulated provide that after paying 7½ per cent. on trade capital, the profits shall be divided between labour and capital. The Society, like other co-operative bodies, is directed by a committee. Like almost every co-operative workshop, the Society in its early days was in want of capital, and as a partial remedy for this, a resolution was passed soon after commencing that until the share capital of the Society reached £500 all profits should be capitalised. As the rules did not provide for the automatic conversion of profits into capital, most of the workers drew out their further share of profit after the above-named sum had been made up, and as new members were not encouraged to invest, the Society for some time made no addition to its membership, but later more reasonable counsels prevailed, and the number of shareholders is 76, of whom 52 are employed by the Society, and there is every wish to see all workmen become members.

From the earliest days the Society has had to fight for its own hand in the open market. The co-operative world could not offer an opening for these goods, and they had to be sold, like the productions of any other factory in the business, to the keen buyers who control this trade. The goods have satisfied the market; they have gained a reputation of quality sufficient to build up an always-growing trade, and from the small things of its childhood, the business of the Society has reached a sum equalling a weekly turnover of £300, employing about 190 people in a new

factory they have had built for them at a cost of £2,500. The Society has led the way in its district in providing a good place for its people to work in.

The Society suffered from the depression, and found competition unusually severe, and the position was very difficult. Owing to the poor state of trade the new premises were not fully utilised, short time was worked, but the experience of the Society warranted it in looking forward to a further growth of trade, which will test the capacity of the new shops, and the figures for last year show improvement.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891 ...	63	£1,389	£944	£1,203	£14,772	£1,029
1895 ...	76	2,134	1,811	1,734	14,048	1,006
1896 ...	87	2,614	2,413	1,696	16,482	1,104

The profit for 1894 was divided as follows :—

Interest on Share Capital, at 7½ per cent.	£158	15	6
Bonus on Interest at 5d. in the £...	3	6	2
Bonus on Wages, at 5d. in the £ (say on £4,800) ...	100	0	0
Educational Purposes	6	0	0
Charitable Purposes	5	0	0
Reserve Fund	5	19	5

The following are the totals of ten years' work :—

Sales	£113,615	0	0
Wages Paid	56,615	0	0
Profits	4,818	0	0
Allocated to Labour	2,268	0	0
Allocated to Capital	527	0	0

But the Society has done much more for the workers than these figures show on the surface. It has done what every thriving co-operative workshop should do, kept up the standard of wages in the trade, educated its people and guided them so well that they now stand at the head of their industry, and have given peace to their trade in a district where formerly industrial war was chronic.

PAISLEY CO-OPERATIVE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, 114 Causeyside Street, Paisley.

Manufacturers of Wool, Union, and Cotton Shirtings and Shirts; Saxony, Tweed, and Velvet Shawls and Handkerchiefs; Thibet, Fancy, and Cotton Skirtings and Skirts; Ladies' Costume Cloths, Harris Tweeds, Wool Cloakings, Scarfs, Flannelettes Bed Quilts, &c.

One of the oldest co-operative workshops. This Society was founded in 1862, being the result of the desire of some members of the local store to extend to productive industry the principles they saw so successfully carried out in distribution. A provisional committee was formed, rules were discussed, and a constitution agreed upon; the early meetings being held in the Secretary's house, which served too as a warehouse while the stock was yet small, as it was for some little time after. The first piece of cloth the Society made was woven in the early days of November 1862.

During 1868 sharing of profits with the purchasers was discussed and finally adopted. A year later it was agreed that dividend on wages be given to all workers of the Society.

The promoters and later guides of the Society wisely saw that their chief strength lay in the production of those goods which Paisley manufactures for the rest of the community. They have thriven well, and have outgrown more than one warehouse. In 1864 a warehouse was taken. In 1873 they moved to larger premises, and, in the course of time, being compelled to remove again, they purchased property for £21,040 to house themselves. They have now housed the business in a factory of their own, built in 1889-90, and since enlarged. A weaving shed, capable of accommodating two hundred power-looms, has already over one hundred fully employed within its walls, as well as beaming, yarn twisting, and winding machines. When the looms are fully employed about 15,000 yards of cloth are turned out weekly.

It will show the growth of the Society if the early days are contrasted with the present time. In 1870 the share and loan capital together were £1,177, and the sales for the year £2,463.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1891 ...	897	£13,377	£19,669	£1,119	£48,361	£3,630
1895 ...	1,457	19,336	35,314	1,640	61,919	4,409
1896 ...	1,564	21,070	35,767	1,144	72,019	4,330

The amount paid in wages for the five years ending June 1880 was £4,920; for those ending June 1885, £13,369; and for those ending June 1890, £31,463.

For the five years ending June 1880, the dividend paid to purchasers was £550; to workers, £68. For the five years ending 1885—to purchasers, £2,056; to workers, £279. For the five years ending 1890—to purchasers, £6,837; to workers, £873.

ROTHWELL CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, Rothwell, Northamptonshire.

Rothwell is an old town, and each old town has one or more curious things to show the stranger. At Rothwell there is a strange and gruesome sight—a collection of bones which each

visitor to the town makes it his duty to see. Perhaps some day, besides this remnant of the past, there will be a new sight to show the stranger—a co-operative factory, the promise of the present for the future.

The Productive Society there is still young—its work lies before it. The Society was registered in 1892 with rules that bring it into line with our other co-partnership societies. Each member has to hold five shares and may not hold more than fifty, and must be a member twelve months before he can serve on the committee, of which ten members must be practically acquainted with the trade. After paying interest of 5 per cent., profits would be divided—40 per cent. to workers; 5 per cent. to committee; 2½ per cent. to social and educational fund; 5 per cent. to provident fund; 7½ per cent. to share capital; and 40 per cent. to customers. A worker's share of profit is carried to his share account until he holds five shares, and after that may be paid in cash.

		Capital.				
Year.	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1894 ...	113	£310	£65	—	£1,194	—
1895 ...	140	501	367	£49	6,300	£111
1896 ...	160	760	320	100	9,400	300

SHEFFIELD CUTLERY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, 189 Rockingham Street, Sheffield.

Table Cutlery, Pocket Cutlery, Shears, Razors, &c.

In 1873 the Society was established chiefly by men employed as scissors smiths and grinders, men engaged in other branches of he trade joining later. For a long time they had an uphill fight; all the share capital had gone, but some sufficient men were there, and they went on. Their productions became known in the Co-operative movement, and the Society started on a better road. More trade brought profit, and the rules were revised to divide this between labour, capital, and trade. A manager was appointed who gave all his time—a step urgently necessary and productive of the best results, for the Society has moved into larger premises.

	Members.	Share Capital.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1891 ...	64	£455	£320	£2,112	£292
1892 ...	66	549	360	1,953	151
1893 ...	64	599	365	1,510	83
1895 ...	72	674	400	1,662	163
1896 ...	70	825	440	1,743	212

CO-OPERATIVE SUNDRIES MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LIMITED, Greenside Lane, Droylsden.

Manufacturers and Packers of all kinds of Grocers' Sundries, Baking Powders, Sauces, Citrate of Magnesia, Custard and Ginger Beer Powders, Lozenges, Glycerine, Furniture Cream and Varnish, &c.

Capital in 1889 was £990, and Reserve Fund £25. The year's trade was £3,387, which produced £120 profit. Profits are divided between capital, custom, and labour. The Society has a capital market for its goods in the stores of the Co-operative movement.

		Capital.				
	Members.	Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Trade.	Profits.
1895 ...	243	£4,343	£2,248	£419	£19,727	£852
1896 ...	282	5,646	2,148	1,085	22,405	1,269

THOMSON & SONS (WILLIAM), LIMITED, Woodhouse Mills, Huddersfield.

Woollen and Worsted Cloths; Productions of English Wool.

This Society is an interesting example of an old-established and well-known firm which has been converted into an industrial partnership. Loan and Share stock each receive 5 per cent.; machinery, &c., has been depreciated 10 per cent.

The workmen are eligible to sit on the committee of management, and a large number of them hold shares in the business.

The rules as to the division of profits provide as a first charge for the payment of five per cent. interest on capital; and in case the state of business does not permit this amount to be paid, the deficit is to be a first charge on subsequent profits. Not less than ten per cent. of the profits is to be carried to a reserve fund, until this amounts to ten per cent. of the capital; and of the remainder, five-ninths (in the form of shares) goes to the workers in proportion to wages earned; and four-fifths may be applied, as the committee may authorise, in rewarding special services, and in making allowances to custom—thus binding more closely together all the parties most concerned. The eight hours' day has been adopted, and the committee report that they have no reason to be dissatisfied with the change.

The firm has for many years previous to the new departure maintained a high reputation for the quality of its productions, taking, for instance, gold and silver medals at an Exhibition of Textile Fabrics held here (Crystal Palace) in 1881. No attempt is made to meet the demand for unworthy goods, the production is rigidly restricted to genuine worsted and woollen goods. There is little reason to doubt that under the able management of Mr George Thomson it will make still further progress in the future. He was appointed a judge at the Chicago Exhibition—an honour to our movement of which co-operators may well be pleased—and was President on the first day of the Co-operative Congress at Huddersfield last year.

The accounts show that at the end of 1890 the Share and

Loan Capital was £17,000. Sales for the year had been £27,940. The Profit was £1,262.

Year.	Members.	Capital. Share.	Loan.	Reserve.	Sales.	Profits.
1891	... 235	£5,373	£11,339	£68	£30,127	£958
1896	... 318	9,606	13,029	533	31,216	2,320

CO-OPERATIVE TYPEWRITERS' SOCIETY LIMITED, 19 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

Most thinking people would welcome any practical attempt to help women to get better conditions for the industries they engage in. Too often, because women are not organised to make collective bargains about wages, hours, and accommodation, they have to suffer—and they suffer all the more in certain occupations, because so many women wish to find work, and there are so few sorts offered them to do that they crowd into the few, and by over competition reduce still lower the already meagre remuneration. Whatever may be the price paid for work, it is desirable that the workers should get the full benefit of it, and that as little as possible should be abstracted on the way by intermediary agencies. The Co-operative Typewriters' Society Limited is therefore welcome, because it will set up co-operative conditions for the workers in an industry which already shows need of better organisation. The Society is on the same co-partnership basis as most of those described in this publication; the workers are shareholders, share in profits and management, and make provision in the rules for Provident and Educational Funds. The management is in practical hands, the office has typewriting machines of a good modern pattern, and has facilities for rapidly turning out large quantities of copies of work when customers require it. It is hoped that in time all those propagandist and teaching bodies that now give out typewriting work will send it to the Co-operative Typewriters to do—some of these organisations are sending it now, but of course individual customers are welcome, their work is well cared for, and they are increasing in number.

At present about £103 has been subscribed for capital, which is raised in £1 shares, and those in charge of the Society's affairs believe it has a good future.

THE UNION CO-OPERATIVE BOOT AND SHOE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY LIMITED, Kettering.

Registered in 1896, this Society has hardly had time yet to establish itself, but the trade for 1896 was £1,016. In the rules of this Society the worker's share of profit is to be paid to his share account, and not paid out as cash.

UNITED BAKING SOCIETY LIMITED, MacNeil Street, Glasgow.

This large and growing Society, established in 1868 as a federation of distributive societies, has grown so well and strong that it is now the largest undertaking of the kind in the United Kingdom, and a sufficient answer to those who doubt the possibility of businesses on the largest scale being conducted on a co-partnership basis. The co-partnership principle is applied in a manner that points the way other great organisations might travel whose conductors wish to work out the harmonious representation of workers and purchasers. It is a most interesting and valuable experiment, and is worked thus—the workers are not taken into partnership individually, but form the "Bonus Investment Society Limited"; only employés are eligible to join this Employés' Bonus Investment Society, which has the right to send to the members' meetings of the United Baking Society one delegate and one in addition for each £80 of capital the Employés' Society holds in the parent society. This system is tending to secure for the workers a substantial holding in the business that employs them, as the following figures show:—

Capital.		Societies.	Workers.	Outside Individuals.
Share	...	£37,907	£2,900	Nil.
Loan	...	79,114	580	£10,728

Of the 830 workers employed, 275 have become members since the plan described above was adopted, and it is a good augury for the future that, as the advocates of co-partnership have long contended, it is possible to set up a true co-partnership of producers and consumers.

		Members.	Trade.	Profits.
1896	...	76	£220,536	£27,490

The 69 members are all societies, including the Employés' Bonus Investment Society.

CONCLUSION.

Having thus briefly described the position of some of the Co-operative Workshops, it is desirable that a few words should be said about two Societies which act for the workshops collectively — the "Co-operative Productive Federation Limited," and the "Co-operative Institute Society Limited"—and it will be best to let the Federation speak for itself in the words of its own publication.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTIVE FEDERATION LTD., 19 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN, W.C.

The objects of the Federation are—

(*a.*) To prepare and circulate regularly among the co-operative distributive societies a list, herein called "The List," of all the goods manufactured by any Society member at the time, either with or without the prices attached thereto, as such members respectively determine, in which no advertisement of any goods competing with goods manufactured by any Society member of the Federation shall be inserted.

(*b.*) To organise a systematic canvass of the co-operative societies, and for that purpose to divide the United Kingdom into districts, to be visited by agents or travellers, either appointed by the committee or under any arrangements entered into by it with any Society member, so that each such agent or traveller represents all the Societies members of the Federation who desire to avail themselves of his services, and carry with him the List.

(*c.*) To establish, as soon as practicable, in each district, centres where samples of any goods in the List may be exhibited, and prices or any other information relating thereto may be obtained. And for this purpose to invite the aid of the distributive societies in all ways found practicable.

(*d.*) To establish, as soon as possible, among the members of the Federation, conferences for the discussion of any matters connected with the business of the Federation, which shall be held at such times and in such order as the general meetings fix from time to time, at the works of each Society member, or, on the request of any such Society, at such other place near thereto as it may select.

(*e.*) To enter into communication with the Central Co-operative Board, the Wholesale Societies, and all other representative bodies in the Co-operative movement, in order to ensure, as far as may be, the harmonious working of the Federation with them.

The Federation—comprising forty-four productive Societies, with an aggregate capital of £145,000—is promoted by the Societies to do for them what can best be done in common, and to carry on the work of co-operation between the Societies themselves after the Societies have organised individuals for combined work. As stated elsewhere, the Federation is now organising a Central Fund, to provide capital for production, and receives loans at 4 per cent. Besides that, great attention has been given to Co-operative Exhibitions, so as to get greater results from them for the exhibiting Societies.

CO-OPERATIVE INSTITUTE SOCIETY LIMITED, 19 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN, W.C.

Establishment of a Metropolitan depot for the sale of co-operative productions, in connection with the other work of the Institute Society.

As the Industrial Co-operative Store movement has not taken root in Central London and only in a few of its suburbs, there is a great market to which the Co-operative Workshops, supplying only Co-operative Stores, have no access. Hitherto the goods produced in Co-operative Workshops have not been brought prominently before the general public in London except in the Exhibition held by the Labour Association annually in the Crystal Palace, in conjunction with the National Co-operative Festival. In each year the Exhibition has excited great interest, and a number of people, drawn from all sections of society, have expressed their regret that there was no permanent depot in London where they could purchase goods produced under Co-operative auspices. Many who are anxious to buy things produced under fair conditions were unable to get them easily.

The Committee of the Co-operative Institute took steps to meet this want. They secured premises in a central and easily accessible part of London, for a depot for the sale of goods produced in Co-operative Workshops, where workers share in profits and management. The premises are situated in a good position, where the goods can be displayed.

The state of public opinion on the subject induced them to believe, after much inquiry, that a depot of this kind can be carried on in a profitable manner. The goods are excellent, and have acquired a good reputation in Co-operative Stores, and can be confidently recommended to the public.

The depot depends not only on the custom of sympathisers, but in addition gets some support from the general public, for the maintenance of fair methods in production need not involve very high prices. With careful management, sound articles can be produced without charging prohibitive prices, such as would deter casual customers.

A Tailoring department has been included, so that those who wish to buy Co-operative cloth can have it made up at reasonable prices, with good fit and style. It is intended to add a Dress-making department, for the convenience of ladies who would like to buy Co-operative dress stuffs.

In the new premises which were lately taken to accommodate the growing trade, a room has been set apart for the display of the beautiful productions of Brownfield's Guild Pottery, and there is every likelihood of this new department securing a large measure of support.

Having established and fitted up the depot in suitable premises where the goods can be properly displayed, the expenses of working up a trade have made some inroads upon the capital, which needs increasing to enable the work to be carried on with vigour. The funds consist of £1 shares, and the shareholder has no further liability beyond the amount of his shares. The business grows in an encouraging manner. Each half-year shows an increased trade.

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